Falling Crane Shears Off Light Standard



A worker received massive head injuries when a crane lifting a 54,600-pound piece of steel tipped over.

The crane was unstable because one outrigger device, which extends from the crane to balance it was inoperable. The crew was concerned about the crane tipping over, so one person was appointed to watch the crane wheels and sound the alarm if the wheels lifted off the ground. He tried to communicate to the crane driver by way of a hand-held radio as the wheels began to lift. The crane operator was unable to hear what he was saying. Seconds later, the crane tipped over.

The victim was also equipped with a radio and was watching to make sure no bystanders were in the way. As the crane began to tip over, all the ground personnel began to run. The crane boom struck a 70-foot wooden light standard, shearing it off. The falling pole struck the victim and killed him. The crane operator was trapped in the crane and had to be rescued. He received extensive injuries but survived.

When machinery is not in good working order, it poses a danger to everyone around it and should never be used until properly repaired. Devices such as the outrigger for this crane are made to prevent mishaps. Formal, hands-on training under qualified supervision is needed to learn how to safely operate machinery. Whenever you use equipment, become familiar with the manufacturer's instructions, such as the load lifting charts for cranes.