Inexperienced Worker Crushed By Elevator

A worker was crushed to death by an elevator he was attempting to repair.

He and a more experienced worker were attempting to move a hydraulic feed line in an elevator pit. He and his partner lowered the car and drained the lines. They then reassembled the line and lifted the car up several feet above the elevator entrance door. They left the pit, but the victim came back alone after the coffee break. He entered the pit and undid the coupling on the line. Hydraulic oil sprayed out, and the elevator car started to come down. He tried to escape through the narrowing doorway gap, but was crushed between the bottom of the car and the sill. He died of asphyxiation and severe chest and stomach injuries. A chain-block had to be brought from another elevator shaft to lift the elevator car off the victim.

The worker had mechanical experience, but no hydraulic experience. Never tackle a job you are not trained and qualified to handle because the results can be fatal. Never work alone in a confined space. The investigators of this fatality made numerous recommendations for safety improvement when elevators are being constructed and repaired.