Mechanic Killed Inspecting Stacker



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On May 5, 2005, a 55-year-old maintenance mechanic was killed while inspecting a lifting machine at a masonry production plant. The recently repaired building materials moving platform, sometimes called a “stacker,” had run normally for four days. The mechanic had been warned not to inspect the moving parts beneath the machine without telling the operator and to use the machine’s lockout system.

An hour into the shift, an operator put the machine into idle to hand load materials. During this time the mechanic opened the gate beneath and inspected the chain mechanism without telling the operator. The operator finished his chore and put the machine into motion and the traveling bar slid and pinned the mechanic’s head against a support bar.

A short time later, a supervisor saw the chain gate open and found the man. An emergency team and the police were called. The mechanic died of blunt force head injuries.

All employees and management should follow and strictly maintain a program of safe operating practices around large machinery. Pinchpoints and large moving parts should be enclosed and danger signs should be visible at these locations. An interlock device should have been in place to shut the machine down when the maintenance gate was opened. An alarm should have activated whenever the machine started to move, not just at start-up.

Source: Oregon Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Case Report: 05OR008