Remote Control Activation Kills Worker In Drum



A worker was inside a cement truck mixing drum, cleaning out the residue which had built up and hardened inside.

He had a portable light and a jackhammer. There was also a remote switch at the end of a cord which activated the rotation of the cement drum on the truck. It appears that he lost his footing and, in trying to regain his balance, grabbed the remote control unit, causing the wires to break free. This resulted in a blown fuse, leaving the cement drum in a continuous discharge motion. All of the material in the drum, including the victim, was forced through the chute at the rear of the cement truck.

There was no consideration given to following a safe lockout procedure prior to beginning this job. The vehicle should have been shut off and the keys should have been in the possession of the person working inside the drum. This is done so that no one else can start the engine – any duplicate keys should have been with the supervisor or in a key lock control. But the truck engine was left running and the keys were left in the ignition. No warning signs were posted to inform others of the work that was in progress. This was also a confined space and there was no watchman.

A sign should also have been posted on the remote switch indicating that it should never be taken inside the drum. It was also recommended that all employee training be accompanied with written safety procedures.