Untrained Driver Flips Bulldozer



A millworker died when the bulldozer he was driving rolled down an embankment.

A lightning strike had caused a fire in the sawmill area. The fire department brought the fire under control and left the scene.

The victim was building a fire break around the perimeter of the fire. He had made several tries to drive the bulldozer up a steep embankment above a creek. After his last failed attempt, he was backing down the slope. He either misjudged the width of the ledge, or he failed to engage the clutch properly. The bulldozer fell down to the creek 80 feet below, flipping end over end. It landed in shallow water.

Two fellow workers heard the wreck. They found the driver face down in the water and unconscious. He was not wearing a hardhat and had not used the seatbelt. One left to call the ambulance and the other held the victim’s head out of water. CardioPulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) was not attempted.

The medical investigator determined the driver had died of drowning, so there is a chance he would have lived if CPR had been applied. If the driver had been wearing a seatbelt and a hard hat, he might not have been knocked unconscious and drowned. The main cause of the fatality was the inexperience of the driver. Never attempt to operate machinery unless you are trained and authorized to do so.