

Worker Killed Loading ATV Onto Service Truck



What happened:

Two workers had finished doing right-of-way cleanup with an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and a small set of diamond harrows. One of the workers selected a loading site and set friction-hold loading ramps on the side of the truck deck. He determined the angle was too steep, repositioned the truck on the roadway and again set up loading ramps.

He then opened an access gate for the ATV. It passed through the gate and the operator stopped to offload equipment. The other worker closed the access gate and observed his companion remount the ATV and begin to run up the ramps onto the truck deck. The left-hand ramp began to move, allowing the ATV to tip to that side. The operator accelerated, leaned to the right and accelerated in that direction. The ATV's front wheels rose off the ramp and into the air and the left-hand ramp failed. The vehicle fell over backwards on top of the operator, causing fatal injuries.

What caused it:

- ATV loading ramps were positioned on the side of the truck so the support brackets were resting on the truck deck.
- The loading ramps were friction-hold ramps and not secured.
- The ATV operator accelerated towards ramps from a distance of 20 feet and hit them, causing the left ramp to move and or fall out of place while the ATV was ascending.

Corrective action:

- All ramped loading systems for the side of service trucks were destroyed as there is no industry standard for ramped loading systems of ATVs.
- ATV trailers with secured, full-width ramp systems are the only systems being used for hauling and loading of these vehicles. ATV trailers typically set between 18 and 24 inches (45-60 cm) from the ground. While there is still a possibility of coming off the ramps, the potential for similar injuries is negligible from this height.