MICHIGAN State FACE Program
Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation

Manufacturing Fatality Summary

INCIDENT FACTS

REPORT #:
22MI010

REPORT DATE:
September 8, 2023.

INCIDENT DATE:
January 17, 2022.

WORKER:
61-year-old

INDUSTRY:
Sawmill

OCCUPATION:
Loader Operator

EVENT TYPE:
Crushed by


Front-end loader with log clam equipped.


Warning stickers on front-end loaders boom.

Sawmill Loader Operator Crushed Performing Maintenance on Front-End Loader

SUMMARY

A 61-year-old loader operator was crushed while attempting to repair a hydraulic line on his front-end loader. As a loader operator he would move logs from the log yard to the sawmill using a front-end loader.


Front-end loader with log clam equipped.

At the time of the incident, the loader operator was working on the Komatsu WA320-7 Wheel Loader equipped with a log clam on the boom. The Komatsu WA320-7 Wheel Loader features a diesel engine with up to 165 horsepower and an operating weight up to 33,984 pounds. The loader operator was working with another loader operator to repair a hydraulic line that that had broken while working in the yard. The Wheel Loader was brought into the maintenance shop area for the repair. In order to access the blown hydraulic line, the boom was raised for access. Repairs to hydraulic lines were a semi-regular maintenance activity occurring about every 3 months and took approximately 15-minutes to complete. The company had a written lockout-tagout program, but the program did not contain specific procedures for the Wheel Loader maintenance. The elevated boom was not blocked up or secured at the time of the incident. Several 4" by 6" hard wood blocks were available but were not utilized.

The assisting loader operator had to step away and radioed a maintenance worker to take over assisting with the repair. When the maintenance worker arrived at the scene, he found the victim crushed between the boom and the frame. Police, fire, and EMS arrived on scene to free the loader operator. The loader operator was declared dead on scene. While attempting the repair, it was concluded that the loader operator loosened the wrong hydraulic line causing the boom to lower under load.

REQUIREMENTS

Employers must:

- Develop, document, and utilize procedures for the control of potentially hazardous energy. See 1910.147(c)(4)(i)
- Conduct periodic inspections of the energy control procedures at least annually to ensure that the procedure and the requirements are being followed. See 1910.147(c)(6)(i)

RECOMMENDATIONS

MIFACE investigators concluded that, to help prevent similar occurrences, employers should:

- Develop, implement, and enforce lockout/tagout procedures for maintenance tasks, including the use of cylinder locks or adequate blocking when the boom is required to be in the raised position during servicing and/or maintenance.
  - When developing lockout/tagout procedures, pay special attention to all sources of potential energy and ensure all tasks involving the potential release of hazardous energy area covered.
- Conduct periodic inspections of authorized employees and review energy control procedures.

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- Develop, implement, and enforce a safety and health program that addresses hazard recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions.
- Ensure employees do not perform potentially hazardous tasks alone.

CITATIONS

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued the following serious citations at the conclusion of its investigation.

- Serious: 1910.147(c)(4)(i): GI PART 85, THE CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS ENERGY SOURCES
  - The procedure was not documented for the control of potentially hazardous energy on the Komatsu WA320-7 Wheel Loader.
  - Blocking was not utilized when the Komatsu WA320-7 Wheel Loader was in the raised position.
- Serious: 1910.147(c)(6)(i): GI PART 85, THE CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS ENERGY SOURCES
  - The employer did not conduct a periodic inspection of their energy control procedures.

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