

Case 27. 22-year-old equipment operator was killed when a front-end loader moving in reverse ran over the pickup truck he had stopped behind the loader.

A 22-year-old equipment operator was the driver of a pickup truck that was traveling behind a front-end loader. The front-end loader was traveling forward on a dead end, single lane dirt mine road to check a fox trap. The road was approximately 20-30 feet wide and 100 yards long. The operator of the road grader was unaware that the victim was driving the pickup truck behind him. The victim had stopped the pickup truck behind the loader on the loader's right side. After arriving at the fox trap location and seeing it empty, the front-end loader driver looked over his left shoulder and began to back up. The victim's truck was in the driver's blind spot because the loader operator only looked over his left shoulder and did not use the mirrors located inside and outside of the loader. The loader's right rear tire ran over the front left side and roof of the pickup truck. The loader operator felt the back end of the loader rise upwards and stop. The loader's back up alarm was operational. The loader driver moved the loader forward and off of the pickup truck. Emergency response was called. The victim was declared dead at the scene.

The Mine Safety and Health Administration conducted the investigation of this fatal incident.

The corrective action as stated in their report: "Establish procedures that require smaller vehicles to maintain a safe distance from large mobile equipment until eye contact is made or approval obtained from the equipment operator. The procedures should also require that the equipment operators check all mirrors prior to moving equipment and ensure that all persons are clear. They should sound the horn to warn unseen persons that the equipment is going to move. All employees should be trained and knowledgeable regarding these procedures. "