

Case 119. 30-year-old truck driver/operating engineer for a concrete company was killed when he was pinned between the bucket of the front-end loader he had been operating and a stationary batch conveyor.

A 30-year-old male truck driver/operating engineer for a concrete company was killed when he was pinned between the bucket of the front-end loader he had been operating and a stationary batch conveyor. The decedent had used the front-end loader to load sand onto the conveyor and was carrying a load of gravel to the same conveyor to be mixed. The batch conveyor would mix the concrete and this mixture would be loaded in cement trucks and delivered to the job site. There was a 5-degree downgrade from the location of the gravel pile to the stationary conveyor. Positioning the front-end loader approximately 8 feet from the conveyor, the decedent dismounted the front-end loader with the loader in gear and the gravel-filled bucket raised approximately three feet above the ground. He did not set the loader's hand-operated parking brake. Next to the parking brake was a mounted expanded metal guard for the heater blower motor. The proximity of the guard to the parking brake caused operators to scrape their knuckles on the guard; thus the parking brake was not used routinely. After dismounting, the decedent walked between the front-end loader bucket and the stationary conveyor to manipulate the batch conveyor controls to move the conveyor to a different position for the gravel. Adjacent to the positioning controls was a hole cut in the cover over the conveyor so employees could look inside to verify that material had cleared the conveyor before adding more or different material. While the decedent was looking into the hole to verify that the sand had cleared, the loader rolled forward pinning the decedent against the batch conveyor frame. The loader moved with enough momentum and force that it bent the batch conveyor's 3-inch channel/angle iron frame as well as a metal fixed ladder located 10 feet away from the decedent's position. The decedent was positioned with his back to the front-end loader and facing the conveyor. The decedent was conscious when he was found by a coworker who moved the loader and called 911. He was transported to a local hospital where he died.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious citation:

- ACT 154 PA OF 1974, SEC. 11(a).
Furnish to each employee employment and a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to the employee in that the employer permits the operation of front end loader without the operator using or engaging the hand brake when dismounting the loader.

The employee dismounted the front-end loader. The loader was left running and in gear. The loader bucket was filled with gravel and left in a raised position. The loader was on a surface that has a 5-degree downgrade. The loader parking brake was not engaged. The employee stepped in front of the loader and the loader moved forward and pinned the employee against a batch conveyor and cause crushing injuries. MIOSHA states: "Among other methods, one feasible

and acceptable abatement method to correct this hazard is to retrain employees on and enforce the use of parking brake and lowering the bucket when leaving the machine per the Operators Manual- Never leave the machine with the engine running or the bucket raised. When parking the machine, shut off the engine, lower the bucket to the ground, lock the transmission shift lever in neutral, apply the parking brake, turn off the electrical master disconnect switch and remove the key.