

Case 142. 53-year-old part owner of a paving company was killed when he was pinned under the operator cage of a skid-steer loader while performing machine maintenance.

A 53-year-old male part owner of the paving company and his crew were breaking up a concrete approach to the driveway to an office building in preparation for replacing it. They were using an attachment on the front of a CAFE 90-XT skid-steer loader that hits down like a sledgehammer. During the work the skid-steer loader began to leak oil. When the crew had completed cleaning up the site, the decedent positioned the skid-steer loader at the end of a driveway with approximately a two-degree incline. A front-end loader was used to raise the front wheels slightly off the ground. The hydraulic cylinder that assisted with the lifting of the operator cage was not working, so the crew of three raised the cage manually so the decedent could access the engine compartment. He was bent at the waist leaning into the area under the cage where the hydraulics were located when the 450-pound cage fell onto his upper torso and pinned him. The crew had been having trouble getting the securing latch that would lock the cage into its up position to engage properly. The latch apparently gave way causing the cage to fall onto the decedent. The crew immediately lifted the cage and called 911. The decedent was transported to the hospital where he was placed on life support in order to preserve his organs for donation. The next day he was removed from life support and pronounced dead.

MIOSHA Construction Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious and Other-than-Serious citations to the employer at the conclusion of their investigation:

SERIOUS:

GENERAL RULES, PART 1, Rule 114(1).

The employer's accident prevention program had not been effectively coordinated with the employees maintaining and operating the skid-steer loader. The procedures outlined in the company safety program were not being followed.

SERIOUS:

GENERAL RULES, PART 1, Rule 115(2).

The employees lifted the operator cab of the skid-steer loader to maintain, fix, and diagnose hydraulic and throttle functions. The operator cab assist cylinder and the cab safety latch were damaged and were not functioning properly.

OTHER-THAN-SERIOUS:

GENERAL RULES, PART 1, Rule 132(3).

No person with a valid certificate in first aid training was present at the worksite to administer first aid.