

Case 233. 44-year-old male cabinet maker died when he was crushed by a load of loosely stacked lumber that fell from a Clark Model C55-S100 powered industrial truck's forks.

A 44-year-old male cabinet maker died when he was crushed by a load of loosely stacked lumber that fell from a Clark Model C55-S100 powered industrial truck's forks. The decedent and his coworker were in the process of obtaining a piece of lumber from a pile of lumber approximately eight feet high. The lumber pile was loosely stacked (not bound) and divided into "stacks" separated by 4x4 pieces of lumber. The powered industrial truck was rated to lift 10,000 pounds at the lower mast position and 5,725 pounds at the upper mast position. The decedent's coworker drove the truck to the pile, lifted two stacks calculated to weigh approximately 13,400 pounds, and backed away approximately six feet. The driver parked the truck against a nearby lumber pile. He turned the truck engine off and left the forks in a raised position approximately four feet above the floor. The decedent and his coworker went in front of the raised lumber to obtain the piece of lumber needed from the remaining three-foot high stack on the floor. After removing the needed piece of lumber, they were in the process of placing 4x4 stacking spacers on top of the stack so they could replace the stacks that were on the forklift forks. They heard the forklift begin to "click." The clicking sound, based on past experience, was thought to have meant that the forklift mast was beginning to tilt toward them. The coworker yelled to get out of the way. The coworker was able to get to the edge of the three-foot high stack and was pinned against it by the falling lumber. He was able to somewhat protect himself with one of the 4x4 spacers. The decedent was unable to get to the edge of the stack and was pinned in the center of and against the stack by the falling lumber. The coworker yelled for help, but his coworkers in the shop could not hear him. Approximately 10 minutes after the incident, a delivery driver arrived, heard the cry for help, and saw the scattered lumber that had fallen from the forklift. The delivery driver ran to the shop and informed them of the situation. The decedent's coworkers arrived, called for emergency response, and began to remove the lumber from the decedent and his trapped coworker. The lumber was removed from the decedent and he was declared dead at the scene. When police arrived, they found that the rear wheels of the Clark forklift were raised approximately six inches above the floor.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious citations to the employer at the conclusion of its investigation:

SERIOUS: POWERED INDUSTRIAL TRUCKS, PART 21.

- **RULE 2154(1):** The employee was not provided with a valid operator permit to operate powered industrial trucks

No training, testing, or permits issued to employees who operate the high lift fork trucks – firm wide.
- **RULE 2174(1):** Ensure that when leaving a powered industrial truck unattended, an operator shall fully lower the forks flat to the floor, neutralize the controls, set the brakes and shut the power off.
- **RULE 2193(d):** Loads that were not within the rated capacity of the powered industrial truck were lifted or transported.