

Mobile Machinery-related Deaths Oklahoma, 1998-2008

July 2011

Oklahoma Occupational Safety and Health Surveillance Program

The use of large, mobile machinery results in many injuries and deaths each year in the United States. From 1998 to 2008, 89 people were killed in non-farming mobile machinery related incidents in Oklahoma. Almost all deaths occurred among males; ages ranged from 18 to 82. One-third of injuries occurred from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Two-thirds of incidents involved a forklift, tractor, aerial lift, or crane. Seventeen percent of injuries were construction related, 15% were work zone related, and 8% were oil and gas related. The most common causes of injuries were being struck/crushed by machinery, falls, and machinery rollovers.

- A 54-year-old male was operating a boom lift at a construction site when he backed into a 9-foot drop. He was catapulted approximately 40 feet from the lift, impacting a parked vehicle.
- A 66-year-old male was moving dirt on a sloped street using a front-end loader. The rear tires of the loader hit a curb and it rolled onto its top. He was ejected as the loader rolled and was pinned underneath it. The front-end loader did not have seat belts or a roll cage.
- A 39-year-old male was laying sod at a new highway construction site using a tractor towing

an 11-foot sod roller. He fell from the tractor, was dragged 30 feet and run over.

- A 19-year-old male was standing close to a backhoe at a work site. The backhoe turned and he was struck in the chest by its boom and knocked down. He stood, walked 20 feet and collapsed. He could not be resuscitated.
- A 54-year-old male was moving a large basket of scrap metal using a forklift. He was operating the forklift on a pile of metal and was not wearing a seat belt. As he was unloading the basket, the forklift overturned and he was crushed under the cage of the forklift.
- A 32-year-old female was riding a mower up a ramp. She popped the clutch of the mower and it rolled on top of her, spilling gasoline all over her. The gasoline was ignited by an exhaust pipe and she sustained severe burns.



Contact Information:
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1000 NE 10th Street
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405-271-3430 or
1-800-522-0204

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Comply with existing OSHA standards for proper safety procedures.
- Train and certify all operators of mobile machinery.
- Develop, implement, and enforce comprehensive safety programs.
- Conduct maintenance of equipment with all safety features in place.
- Maintain/utilize equipment per the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Use task-specific equipment and be alert to potential hazards.
- Provide well-lighted work environments.
- Be aware of and avoid electrical hazards and power lines.
- Use caution when operating mobile machinery near holes, ditches, and sloped/graded terrain or embankments.
- Do not enter trenches that have not been properly shored. Equipment and materials should be stored away from the edge of a trench to prevent collapse of trench walls.
- Keep workers on foot separated from equipment as much as possible.
- Use spotters to guide equipment operators.
- Install back-up alarms, back-up cameras, and radar on vehicles.
- Know the weight of a load and the limitations of the machinery used.
- Install rollover protection structures on all applicable machinery.
- Wear seat belts when operating equipment.
- Wear proper safety equipment: fall protection, goggles, hard hats, etc.

The Oklahoma Occupational Safety and Health Surveillance Program collects statewide information on 19 occupational health conditions in order to develop and inform occupational injury and illness prevention programs. Oklahoma's occupational surveillance system is a research program of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

For detailed reports, please go to the Occupational Injuries section at:
<http://ips.health.ok.gov>