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ALASKA FACE Facts

Department of Health and Social Services
Division of Public Health-Section of CHEMS
Occupational Injury Prevention Program

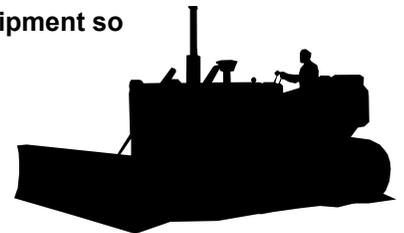
Bulldozer Operator Crushed by Bulldozer During Construction of Oil

A 49-year-old male bulldozer operator (the victim) was crushed to death while compacting earthen fill with a bulldozer during the construction of an oil exploration island. The victim was operating the bulldozer on level ground, alternately in forward and reverse at half throttle. With the blade completely down, the victim presumably shifted the transmission control lever to or toward neutral. The transmission may have been partially disengaged, but not fully in neutral. Assuming the bulldozer transmission to be in a stable neutral position (and without shifting the transmission control safety lever into the neutral lock position), the victim exited the cab on the right side, and stepped down onto the track of the bulldozer to give directions to a truck driver. Investigative information suggests that at this moment the transmission may have slipped back into the first gear of reverse, causing the bulldozer to move suddenly in reverse. As a result, the victim was pulled between the underside of the fender and the top of the track cleats. As the bulldozer continued in reverse, the victim was fatally crushed beneath the track cleats. NIOSH investigators concluded that, in order to prevent future similar occurrences, employers should:

- **ensure that mobile equipment is not left unattended unless all precautions necessary to prevent motion have been taken**
- **ensure that compliance with safe work procedures are enforced through frequent inspections and observation of employee work habits**
- **ensure that employees receive regular training that addresses safe work procedures**
- **consider installing two-way radios inside the cabs of trucks and heavy equipment so that operators can communicate without leaving their cabs.**

Additionally, equipment manufacturers should:

- **consider equipment engineering designs and controls to prevent machine-related injuries**
- **develop and affix appropriate safety signs inside the cabs of bulldozers and other heavy equipment, listing necessary precautions.**



To view previous FACE reports please visit the Occupational Injury Prevention Program website:

http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chems/occupation_injury

or

Call or fax your request to:

907-269-5221 (phone) 907-269-5236 (fax)

To receive the latest FACE updates via the Internet please send an email to djilly@health.state.ak.us