

## TOOLBOX TALK #27

### PREVENT CAUGHT IN/BETWEEN INCIDENTS

Cave-ins during excavation work, body parts being pulled into unguarded machinery, standing within the swing radius of cranes and other equipment, and being caught in between a piece of equipment and a fixed object – all of these are examples of caught in/between incidents that can occur at work.



Construction workers are particularly vulnerable. Between 2003 and 2015, caught-in and caught-between injuries resulted in 1059 construction worker deaths, accounting for about 8% of the industry's fatalities during this period, according to the Center for Construction Research and Training – also known as CPWR. These injuries and fatalities are preventable. To assist, OSHA provides the following hazard examples and safety solutions.

**Hazard:** Excavation work. Excavation workers are more than twice as likely to be killed than workers in any other type of construction work, according to OSHA. A cave-in can occur when the soil is unstable; too much weight is too close to the sides of the excavation; water is in the excavation site; or conditions change because of weather, including heavy rain, freezing and melting.

**Solutions:** OSHA requires a competent person to be onsite during excavations. This person must be trained in recognizing hazards that exist and could occur, and must have the authority to take corrective action if necessary. He or she must inspect the worksite and any protective systems every day before work begins. Additionally, all excavations and trenches deeper than 5 feet, but less than 20 feet deep, must use one of three methods: sloping or benching, trench box or shield, or shoring.

**Hazard:** Unguarded machinery. Workers can have parts of their bodies or clothing pulled into machinery, resulting in severed/lost limbs or even death.

**Solutions:** Workers should never use a piece of machinery that is not properly guarded, and should be trained to recognize and avoid unsafe machinery conditions.

**Hazard:** Caught between objects (forklifts, cranes, other vehicles) and a fixed object, such as a wall.

**Solutions:** Do not allow employees to stand or pass between swinging equipment, forklifts or vehicles. Barricades should be used to keep workers out of dangerous areas.

**Hazard:** Caught in a piece of equipment or machinery.

**Solutions:** Workers should be trained on proper lockout/tagout procedures, including turning off vehicles and equipment before beginning repair or maintenance work. Vehicles should be stopped with wheels blocked to prevent movement, and bulldozers and other similar equipment should have their blades lowered before making repairs or when not in use.