

TOOLBOX TALK #20

DUMP TRUCK OPERATOR FATALLY ELECTROCUTED

On the day of the incident, a 61-year-old dump truck owner-operator was transporting crushed rock to fill a sinkhole. The victim raised the bed of the dump truck, which contacted high-voltage power lines, causing a rear tire to catch fire.

As the dump truck operator attempted to exit the vehicle, he stepped off the metal running board while holding on to the side of the truck. Because he was in contact with the ground and the electrified dump truck (at the same time), the victim became grounded, completing the circuit and was immediately electrocuted.

The victim's coworker and employees from the primary construction company were able to pull him away and douse him with a fire extinguisher to put out the flames on his body. The electrical current had entered and exited his feet and hands.

At the time of the incident, the company consisted of only two employees; the victim and his brother-in-law. As a result, no written or verbal safety or training programs were in place. The two men relied on their experience in the field to maintain their safety.

To Prevent Future Occurrences:

- Perform a hazard assessment before beginning work to be aware of the hazards in the immediate area.
- Require drivers to have a spotter when working around electrical lines.
- Have motor vehicles maintain a safe working distance from high-voltage lines.
- Communicate to workers that when a vehicle contacts electrical power lines, best practice is for passengers to remain in the vehicle and call 911.