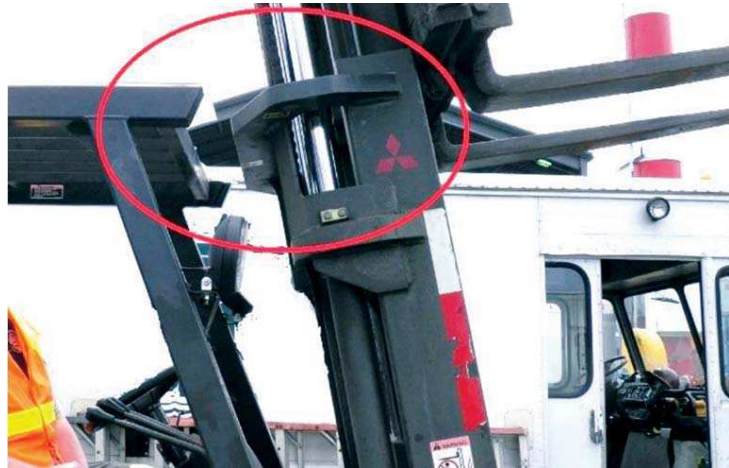


TOOLBOX TALK #46

FORKLIFT OPERATOR CRUSHED

A 61-year-old forklift operator died after he was crushed between a forklift's mast and the overhead guard of the operator's cab.

The incident occurred when the operator left the forklift's seat, climbed over the console, and stood on the dash between the mast and the overhead guard – presumably to look into a bin elevated on the forks. He did not turn off the forklift's engine. As he stood on the dash, his right foot moved backwards and contacted the mast tilt control lever on the console. The mast tilted back, crushing the operator's torso between the mast cross member and the overhead guard.



Workers helped him down and administered first aid. Paramedics transported the operator to a hospital, where he died in the emergency room. A toxicology report indicated the operator had a blood alcohol concentration of 0.026%.

To help prevent similar incidents, employers should:

- Ensure forklift operators never position themselves between the overhead guard of the operator's cap and the mast while the forklift is running.
- Ensure standard operating procedures are followed, and review and revise them as necessary.
- Ensure operators don't use alcohol before or while operating equipment.
- Consider purchasing or equipping forklifts with a safety interlock device that prevents movement while the operator is not seated properly at the controls.