Brakeless Loader Rolls Into Ash Pit

A front-end loader was working on a dirt road beside a fly ash pit. The loader went off the road into the pit, turned over and pinned the driver under water, where he drowned. The driver and at least a half-dozen other employees knew the loader brakes weren’t working and hadn’t been for about two months. The loader was also lacking a rollover protective structure or seatbelts. There was no guard railing along the roadway or edge of the pit.

The lives of the operator and everyone working in the area were endangered every day this loader continued to work without adequate brakes. One worker died while driving the loader, but the victim could just as easily have been a pedestrian. Many fatalities in many industries have been caused by equipment the whole crew knew was defective. Unsafe equipment must be removed from service and properly repaired or replaced before it is used again.