Drill Workers Electrocuted

A forklift overturned at a salvage lumber operation, fatally injuring the operator. The young worker had been asked to move the forklift from the lumber storage area to the resaw area when he returned to work from a break. He had offered a ride to a co-worker who was also returning to work. She had accepted and was riding on the right side of the forklift, holding onto the overhead guard. The victim turned sharply to the left, and the forklift tipped and overturned to the right.

The co-worker jumped from the machine while the victim was thrown or jumped from the operator's seat. The victim's head was caught between the overhead guard and the ground. The co-worker's ankle was pinned. Other workers heard screams and went to the forklift. They raised the machine to free the co-worker and pulled the victim from under the overhead guard. The co-worker was treated for injuries and survived but the operator died at a hospital.

To prevent similar incidents, investigators recommended:

- forklifts only be operated by employees who are specifically trained.
- forklifts should be equipped with adequate driver restraint systems to protect workers in case of a rollover.
- riders should not be allowed on forklifts unless the machines are specifically designed for passengers such as forklift driver trainees.