Excavator Bucket Throws Passenger

Two plumbers had been working in a construction trench. When it was time to come back up to the street level, they rode in the bucket of an excavator. As the excavator operator started to swing to the side for them to get off, the bucket jerked. One of the plumbers fell about 15 feet (five meters) from the bucket to the trench. He hit his head on a pipe and died.

These workers should have been provided with a safe means of exit from this trench, such as steps or a ladder. Hitching a ride on heavy equipment has proved a fatal shortcut for many workers. Never ride in the bucket of earthmoving equipment; use only lifting devices designed to carry personnel. Never ride on a forklift or other equipment unless there is a seat and seatbelt provided for a passenger. The equipment operator is ultimately responsible for the safe operation of machinery, and should never allow a situation such as this. Lack of adequate supervision is apparent in this fatality.