Forklift Rolls Onto Youth

His parents were long-time customers, and the victim had done odd jobs at the store. The day of the tragedy was his first regular job—carrying customers' bags—and the employer planned to orient him after going to the bank.

Meanwhile, the victim hauled bags while another employee worked the till. The victim overheard a customer order hay bales, and apparently decided to fetch them. The forklift's keys were always in its ignition. The victim drove it across the asphalt to the haystack. With forklift mast raised, he backed over a rain gutter and lost control. As the machine overturned, he tried to jump clear. The forklift crushed his torso.

Workers under age 18 generally lack the maturity and experience of older workers. Studies of plant workers and miners, for instance, showed workers have higher rates of injuries the first five months on the job, with younger workers injured more often than older.

Workplaces should have a system to control access to power-driven machinery.