Heavy Equipment (Two Major Hazards) Fatality File

Construction Worker Killed by Bulldozer

A 56-year-old construction worker died after he was run over by a bulldozer. He was acting as a spotter to help a truck driver move his vehicle. While doing so, the man stepped in front of a pile of gravel that the dozer was about to spread. The operator did not see the spotter and ran over him as he moved the dozer in reverse. A nearby worker yelled a warning to both the spotter and the dozer driver, an experienced heavy equipment operator. Neither man heard the warning. The spotter also failed to heed the bulldozer's backup alarm. The bulldozer rolled over the spotter and he was pronounced dead at the scene.

The first lesson to be learned from that event is that a safety meeting should be held each morning prior to the start of work so that everyone knows the planned work for the day, the possible hazards and the safety procedures. Also, workers should be told how any changes in the plan will be communicated. Another lesson is that all workers on foot should remain clear of moving equipment. Another lesson is what safety procedures heavy equipment operators need to follow, such as setting up barriers around their work area, checking backup alarms, warning others when they start up their equipment and checking behind the equipment if they back up. Finally, workers on construction sites with heavy equipment should wear clothing that makes them highly visible to co-workers.