Poor Communication Contributes to Crushing Death

A maintenance mechanic died when he was crushed between an overhead bridge – crane and a light fixture. The incident occurred while the victim was on the – roof of the iron and steel works facility where he worked. A contractor noticed – the victim sitting on the crane rails and tried to alert the crane operator but – it was too late. The crane operator – unaware anyone was on the roof and- watching the load – moved the crane along the overhead rail until it pinned the – victim against a light fixture. He later died from his injuries.

The victim was found on the roof without tools, work orders, measuring – equipment, writing utensils or communication devices. He had been assigned to- work in the tool room that day and both his supervisor and superintendent say – there were no maintenance jobs or requests for work that would have taken him up – to the roof area where he died. If maintenance was required, they say- lockout/tagout procedures would have been implemented.

Communication is key for all worksites, especially those where heavy – equipment is used. Workers put their lives and the lives of others at risk when – they fail to follow health and safety procedures or fail to let others know when- they leave or change job locations.

Source: California Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) – Program, Case Report 05CA011