Safe Courier Driving for Landscapers: Delivering Materials Without Incident Fatality File

Delivery driver crushed by granite slab

A 57-year-old delivery driver was killed after being struck by a slab of granite in the parking lot of a countertop wholesaler. The wholesaler secured granite slabs for transport on a flatbed trailer using a metal A-frame rack that held multiple slabs in a near-vertical orientation. Stone slabs were off-loaded by the wholesaler’s employees using a forklift equipped with a boom attachment. The boom attachment was equipped with a “slab clamp” designed to clamp onto an individual slab to allow it to be moved. On the day of the incident, two of the wholesaler’s employees assisted the delivery driver in off-loading the granite from the flatbed. One employee operated the forklift used to move slabs, while the other served as a spotter. The delivery driver climbed onto the flatbed to remove straps used to secure the slabs during transport. He then readied each slab for rigging and off-loading. During the rigging process, a miscommunication occurred between the delivery driver and forklift operator. This caused the operator to drive the forklift away from the flatbed before the slab clamp device had been secured to the slab – and before the delivery driver was positioned outside of the fall shadow of the slab. The slab was pulled forward past its tipping point toward the forklift. It struck the delivery driver and knocked him off the flatbed, then crushed him when it fell to the ground. Emergency medical services were called, but the driver died about 50 minutes after the incident. Cause of death was listed as injury by crushing. The granite wholesaler did not have a written worker

safety program or training regarding moving and lifting of granite slabs.

To help prevent similar occurrences, employers should:

- Use stone slab storage racks engineered with individual compartments to support stone slabs.
- Identify slab fall shadow zones and restrict employees from placing themselves in the zones whenever a slab can fall.
- Provide written safety programs and training.

Source: *safetyandhealthmagazine.com*