Steel Beam Crushes Laborer

A forklift driver and two laborers were stacking 40-foot (12.91-meter) I-beams in preparation for a structural steel construction job. One of the laborers was placing a wooden spacer on the last I-beam when the forklift driver drove up to the stack beside him. The forklift was carrying another I-beam that was not secured to the forks. This I-beam fell from the forks and pinned the laborer between the fallen one and the stack. The worker died of crushing injuries.

Investigation into this fatality showed supervision and training were lacking. The workers had not been informed adequately about the hazards of their jobs. This was in spite of being employed (in the case of the laborer who died) for four years in this kind of work and five weeks on that particular construction project. Anyone who operates a forklift needs training in securing a load properly and watching for pedestrians. Anyone who works around a forklift needs training on the hazards of moving machinery and elevated loads.