Safety Tip of the Week

Preventing Backovers

Backover incidents are not infrequent. They occur when a vehicle is in the action of backing up and strikes a worker who is standing, walking, or kneeling behind the vehicle.

How Do Backover Incidents Occur?

Backover accidents can happen for a variety of reasons, such as:

- Drivers don't see a worker in their blind spot;
- Workers don't hear backup alarms;
- A spotter assisting one truck doesn't see another truck behind him;
- Workers fall off vehicles and are backed over; and
- Drivers assume areas are clear and don't look to confirm.

Sometimes, it is just unclear why a worker was in the wrong place at the wrong time in the path of a backing vehicle. Could be a combination of issues that result in this tragedy!

What Can Be Done?

- **USE A SPOTTER** to help the driver when they are backing up their vehicles;
- **USE TECHNOLOGY** – use video cameras with in-vehicle display monitors for a better behind view. Proximity detection devices, such as radar and sonar, can alert drivers to objects that are behind them;
- **USE A TAG-BASED SYSTEM** to alert the driver when someone is behind the vehicle, and they can communicate with the employee wearing the tag;
- **CREATE A TRAFFIC CONTROL PLAN** telling drivers where to drive and reduce the need to back up;
- **SEPARATE** employees on foot from operating equipment; and
- **TRAIN WORKERS** on the prevention of backover incidents, helping them to avoid being in those areas. Let them sit in the driver's seat and then they will know where the "**BLIND SPOT**" is.

BACKOVER INCIDENTS DO NOT HAVE TO HAPPEN!