



Weekly Safety Meeting

The Fatal 4: Caught-in or -between

Of the OSHA fatal four in the construction industry, the caught in/between hazard category accounts for about 2% of all deaths. A caught-in or -between incident occurs when a worker is caught, stuck, crushed, squeezed, or pinched by or caught between parts of an object or two or more objects.

Caught Events

A ‘caught’ event results in being crushed between objects. Some examples of caught events include:

- Injuries caused by machinery that has unguarded parts
- Buried in or by
 - A trench or excavation collapse/cave-in
 - A wall collapse
- Pinned between
 - Being pulled into/caught in machinery or equipment
- Being compressed or crushed between rolling, sliding, or shifting objects such as:
 - A truck frame and hydraulic bed that is lowering
 - A conveyor belt and a pinch point
 - An asphalt spreader and a pavement roller

How to Protect Yourself

It is important to be aware of hazards on the worksite and to know what is safe. Training is key to understanding what areas present danger and how to protect yourself; your employer should provide training.

Use machinery that is properly guarded and never remove machine guarding. If a band saw has a guard, don't take it off. Use a piece of wood to push what you are cutting close to the blade, not your hand. Avoid wearing loose clothing or jewelry that can get caught in moving parts.

Make sure that machinery is supported, secured, or made safe. Make sure equipment is disconnected from power when not in use. If equipment is unsteady or might roll, make sure it is stable before beginning work or stop if it becomes unstable.

For example, make sure an aerial lift is level and the wheels are chocked to prevent a rollover.

Prevent ‘pinning.’ Never put yourself in a ‘pinch point’ between a moving part and a fixed part, like equipment, materials, or other objects. Be aware where equipment and moving vehicles are and

stay a safe distance from them. Don't stand between a movable object such as a semi-trailer and an immobile one like a dock wall. Make sure loads are secured and stable--whether in a forklift or a hoist, loads should be balanced and tightly strapped down. Be aware of and avoid the swing arm of cranes and other equipment.

How Your Employer Should Protect You

Employers must do many things to ensure worker safety when it comes to caught-in or -between Hazards. Employers must do the following:

- Provide guards on power tools and other equipment with moving parts.
- Support, secure, or make equipment parts safe that workers could be caught-in or -between. All equipment should be deenergized and locked out/tagged out when not in use. Parts should be fully lowered and in resting position when not in use.
- Take measures to prevent workers from being crushed by heavy equipment. Employers should equip material handling equipment with rollover protective structures, seat belts (and ensure their use), and designate a competent person for crane operations.
- Take measures to prevent workers from being pinned between heavy equipment. Employers must make sure that workers avoid pinch points and that travel paths for loading/unloading, stacking, and storing materials do not present a caught between hazard for workers. The employer must also make sure proper bracing is used in trenches and that only necessary personnel are in the work area during demolition.
- Provide protection for workers during trenching or excavation work. A competent person must make sure the trenching and excavation meet OSHA standards; and they must be trained in soil classification, the use of protective systems, and the OSHA standards. All excavations and trenches more than 5 feet deep must be protected by sloping, shoring, benching or a trench box/shield. If an excavation is more than 20 feet deep, a professional engineer must design the system to protect workers. Nothing should be able to roll into the trench or fall onto workers in the trench. Warning systems must be established if workers in the trench do not have a visual of overhead equipment.
- Provide means to prevent the collapse of structure scaffolds. If a scaffold collapses, workers could be buried underneath.
- Employers must make sure that a competent person selects and directs workers who build the scaffold. The scaffold cannot use cinderblocks or similar materials for support, because these can be crushed.
- Provide means to prevent work injury by collapsing walls. During demolition or other construction activities, any stand-alone wall must have lateral bracing, and jacks must have a firm foundation.
- Designate a "competent person," meaning someone who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the work area and who is authorized to take corrective measures to eliminate them. A competent person must be designated to supervise scaffold erection, conduct inspections of excavations and protective systems (trenching), and carry out pre- and continual demolition engineering/structural surveys where floors could collapse on workers.

- Provide training for workers. Employers should instruct workers to recognize and avoid hazards and familiarize employees with regulations and practices to avoid on-the-job injury or illness. PPE should be provided as well as training on how to use it. Specific training should be provided to workers who are involved in any way with scaffolding.

Learn from the Fatalities

Accident descriptions of caught-in and caught-between include some of the most gruesome accident summaries imaginable. A 2,500 lb. bowl apron of a scraper left in the raised position fell on an employee. A pants leg got caught in a bore hole rod while it was still spinning. Rollovers and cave-ins...the list goes on. Many of these fatalities could have been prevented. So, ask questions, stay aware, and play it safe!

IF IN DOUBT...SEEK ANSWERS OUT!

