



## Struck-by & Caught-between Accidents

Some of the most traumatic injuries and gruesome fatalities you might ever see on a construction site are caused by struck-by and caught-in-between accidents. But following a few safe work practices when you are around heavy equipment can help keep you out of harm's way. Keep in mind that most struck-by and caught-in-between accidents don't result in injuries but rather in fatalities. Just consider the weight and size of the large machines and equipment moving all around you. If you're run over by one of them, you probably won't live to tell about it.

**Mobile equipment always has the right of way.** Crossing in front of a piece of machinery in an attempt to take a shortcut may result in your life being cut short. The operator may not see you or may not have time to react quickly enough. Remember that heavy equipment operators already have a lot to think about while they are at the controls. They are focused on working the equipment in a safer and productive manner. They can't stop on a dime to let someone cross in front or behind the machine.

**When you work near heavy equipment, give it lots of room.** Don't work in blind spots. If you must walk in its path, always get the attention of the operator and wait until he or she signals that it is safe for you to cross.

**Never put your body between a fixed object and either a piece of equipment or a load.** If you need a shocking reminder of why you should never do this, you might read some of the horrific reports that OSHA inspectors write up after a caught-in-between accident. For example, a worker was leaning up against a wall while working with a track hoe operator. The operator swung the hoe around, and the worker was crushed by the bucket. There's no walking away from an accident like that. If you check those reports, you'll also be surprised at how often operators are run over or struck by their own equipment. Such accidents can happen when operators stop the machine and jump out for "just a second." Always immobilize heavy equipment before leaving it. Stay alert and stay alive.

**Recognize and respect established exclusion zones.** They are in place to keep everyone out of the danger zone. Exclusion zones mean exactly that—KEEP OUT. If you are the operator and you see someone in the exclusion zone, don't move the equipment until the zone is empty. You have a responsibility to operate the equipment safely.

**Never put yourself between a rock and a hard place.** Notice your surroundings; don't sit, work, or stand where you could be crushed or run over. Look up; watch for cones,



barriers, and caution tape; stay away from tilt-up panels; and pay attention to back-up alarms. When working near heavy equipment, don't let your guard down for a moment.

## **SAFETY REMINDER**

**Fully immobilize heavy equipment when it is parked. Engage parking brakes and use chocks if necessary, even if you're just leaving the machine for a quick break.**