



Handle with caution

Asphalt paving is a carefully choreographed operation where attention to detail is critical.

The accident: A member of a paving crew was making adjustments to the hopper of an asphalt paver when a dump truck backed up to the hopper. The driver, not seeing him, dumped the truck's load of asphalt on the man, burying him. He did not survive.

The bottom line: With temperatures hovering around 275 to 300 degrees during paving operations, hot asphalt must be handled with caution. Remember these working rules:

On the machine

Stay in the operator's station at all times when operating your machine. Assure that the work area is clear of all unauthorized persons, and signal your intent to move. Don't jump – either on or off – the machine.

Look, listen and feel for machine malfunctions. If malfunctions or erratic operations are detected, stop the machine and correct or report the situation immediately.

When loading material, make certain that all crew members are clear of the area. Watch delivery trucks to ensure there are



Illustration by Don Lomax

adequate side and overhead clearances to any obstacles, including utility lines and overpasses.

If the machine has an auger, keep all personnel clear of the auger any time the engine is running or about to be started. Make sure proper auger and screed extensions and guards are present, especially when changing paving width.

Know and obey all flaggers and ground level personnel signs and signals. Be observant of other workers, personnel and other machines on the job.

On the ground

Keep hands and feet clear of the machine while adjusting or working near grade references and sensors.

Stay clear of moving parts, such as the augers, hopper, conveyors, screed arms, screed extensions and truck hitch. Never remove paving material from the auger or hopper while the engine is running. Stay out of the path of reversing trucks, and wear protective clothing to guard against hot or warm-mix asphalt. **EW**

Information for this Safety Watch came from the Association of Equipment Manufacturers. It is meant for general informa-

tion only; to order AEM's "Asphalt Paver Safety Manual," go to www.aem.org.