

Stay put

You're safer inside a tipping forklift than outside

The accident: After putting his machine in reverse on some banking, a rough terrain operator felt his machine start to tip. Panicking, the operator threw himself from the forklift and was immediately crushed by the tipping machine. Safety officials determined if he had remained inside the machine he would have survived the accident, since leaving the machine caused it to reach the limit of its stability.

The bottom line: Indecision and trying to escape from a tipping forklift can result in death or serious injury. If a forklift ever becomes unstable and starts to tip over, do the following:

- Brace yourself
- Stay with the forklift
- Keep your seat belt fastened
- Hold on firmly and lean away from the point of impact.

Before you operate, learn as much as possible about the work area. Walk around the worksite and inspect the surfaces over which you travel. Note any holes, drop offs, obstacles, rough spots, electrical lines and apparatus, soft soil, deep mud, standing water, oil spills or slippery surfaces.

Watch for any conditions that could cause loss



Illustration by Don Lomax

of control, a collision or a tipover. Also check overhead clearances. Know the size of doorways and canopies. Know exactly how much clearance you have under power and telephone lines.

Maintain a specified distance from electrical lines and apparatus. Never approach energized power lines or apparatus with any part of your machine unless all governmental required safety precautions have been taken. Use extreme caution. **EW**

Information for this Safety Watch came from an actual accident report and from the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

It is meant for general information only; to order AEM's "Rough Terrain Forklift Safety Manual" go to www.aem.org.