

Unseen, unheard



Illustration by Don Lomax

It was a crowded, noisy and busy construction site. Dump trucks came and went delivering gravel, and a hydraulic excavator loaded the trucks with spoils from a trench. A skid steer distributed the gravel from the dump piles, and a dozer spread it all out.

The victim, a 56-year-old male construction worker, drove one of the dump trucks while the boss leveled the gravel with the dozer. When the trucks weren't being loaded with spoils from the excavator, the victim passed the time sitting in the truck cab or getting out to mingle with the crew, take bathroom breaks, etc.

The area where the trucks entered the lot to dump the gravel was tight, due to structures and the location of the excavator. Several truckloads of gravel had already been dumped on the ground, creating a large pile and further restricting site lines on the ground.

About 10:30 that morning a truck delivered and dumped another load of gravel but did not lower the dump body or drive away from the immedi-

ate vicinity. The victim stepped out from behind the gravel pile to signal the truck driver to lower the dump body and move out, at the same time as the dozer went into reverse heading for the gravel pile. A skid steer operator yelled a warning to the dozer operator and the victim, but because of the noise of the jobsite, he was not heard by either. The dozer struck the victim, knocking him to the ground and running over his legs. When the dozer operator saw the victim on the ground, he called 911 and started administering CPR. EMS personnel arrived just two minutes later but were unable to revive the victim. He was pronounced dead at 10:44 a.m.

How this accident could have been prevented:

- A jobsite hazard analysis should be conducted and communicated to all personnel at the site. Anytime the jobsite changes, such as the erection of buildings, digging of trenches or addition of material stockpiles, the hazard analysis should change as well

and new information relayed to all at the morning tailgate talk.

- Before work starts, supervisors should map out truck routes and designate spaces where spotters on the ground can stand and be seen by truck drivers and equipment operators.
- Supervisors should schedule tasks so that personnel spend as little time on the ground as possible. In this example the victim was switching between skid steer operation, truck driving and truck spotting, putting him on the ground between machines and trucks far too frequently.
- Use two-way radios to communicate between operators and truck drivers.
- Use backup cameras to improve visibility on equipment.
- Set up Jersey barriers or other obstacles to mark safe places for workers to walk.

For more information on this accident and steps you can take to prevent these kinds of incidents, go to: bit.ly/DozHaz



Date of safety talk: _____ Leader: _____
 Attending: _____