

SAFETY NOTES

Department of Consumer & Business Services
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division
Salem, OR 97310

Seriously Disabling Injury Report

Injury type Run over by forklift
Industry Freight transportation
Employee job title Truck driver

Description of accident

The accident occurred at a warehouse where trucks were loading and off-loading shipments from tractor-trailer rigs. The victim, an experienced truck driver who had visited this warehouse for about a year, had just left the warehouse break room and was returning to his truck, the trailer of which was backed up to the center of the dock. The trailer was being unloaded and its contents put onto pallets by lumpers on the dock. The truck driver, carrying a cup of coffee, was walking out of the warehouse to the loading dock, through a bay door. A forklift that had been off-loading the first trailer in line came from the truck driver's left, and ran over the truck driver's left foot. The forklift driver had worked for more than a year on the dock at the warehouse. The victim was struck by the forklift's mast framing, and was thrown forward. The forklift came to a stop with the victim's right foot caught under a tire. Lumpers (day workers unloading freight) and other employees immediately extricated the victim and moved him into a trailer to protect him from the rain. Employee EMTs served as first responders and the victim was transported to a hospital emergency room with severe damage to his left foot and ankle. He was admitted for surgery that entailed removal of the toes on his left foot and reattachment of degloved skin.



Investigation findings

The forklift driver did not see the pedestrian. It was established that pallets were often stacked between the north and west doors of the warehouse, obstructing the view from one bay door to another. Although there was a pedestrian door, the victim did not use it, and, although there was a policy that non-employee pedestrians be escorted through the warehouse, it was apparently not applied to truck drivers who regularly visited the break room. Although there were pedestrian walkways and vehicle routes, they were not clearly marked.

Applicable OSHA standards

The warehouse was cited for three serious violations:

- OAR 437-02-221(2)(a) — Permanent aisles and passageways not appropriately marked
- OAR 437-02-022(2)(a) — Provisions for safety (adequate work and storage space) were not included in plant design, layout, and operation, exposing the employees on the dock to hazards.
- OAR 437-01-765(2)(a) — A safety committee had not been established and administered by the employer, although the company had 40 employees.