

MNM Fatal 2012-16

- Powered Haulage Accident
- October 24, 2012 (Nebraska)
- Underground Crushed Stone Operation
- Utility Miner
- 52 years old
- 19 years of experience

Overview

The victim was killed while operating a lift truck, traveling down a decline ramp toward the mine entrance, when he lost control of the vehicle. The lift truck traveled across the haul road, striking a concrete support for a belt conveyor. The lift truck rolled to the right side, landed on its top, and came to rest on its left side. The victim was wearing a seat belt.

The accident occurred due to management's failure to ensure the lift truck was being used as intended by the manufacturer because it was designed to be used on improved surfaces not on rough surfaces as the decline ramp. Additionally, the victim had not been task trained to operate the lift truck and lost control of the lift truck while traveling down the decline ramp. He was descending an approximate 17% grade while carrying an empty trash dumpster with the load downgrade.



Root Causes

ROOT CAUSE: Management policies and procedures failed to ensure the lift truck was being used as intended by the manufacturer because it was designed to be used on improved surfaces not on rough surfaces as the decline ramp. *The manufacturer's operator manual for this lift truck states "The lift trucks are NOT intended for use on public roads. The cushion tire lift trucks are designed for use indoors on smooth dry surfaces" and "DO avoid slippery surfaces!"*

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The mine operator evaluated the conditions and safety practices to identify equipment that is designed to operate on the grades subjected to on the decline ramp. The mine operator purchased a lift truck, capable of operating on the decline ramp within the design of the manufacturer, to pick up the trash inside the mine. Additionally, warning signs were posted at the approaches of the decline ramp.

ROOT CAUSE: The victim had not been task trained to operate the lift truck. He was descending an approximate 17% grade while carrying an empty trash dumpster with the load downgrade.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: All persons assigned to operate the new lift truck on the decline ramp were task trained to operate the vehicle and trained to look for the warning signs posted at the approaches of the decline ramp.

Best Practices

- Conduct adequate pre-operational checks and ensure the service brakes are properly maintained and will stop and hold the mobile equipment prior to operating.
- Ensure that mobile equipment operators are adequately task trained in all phases of mobile equipment operation before performing work.
- Ensure the load is stable and secured on the forks of the forklift.
- When descending a grade, operate the forklift with the load in the upgrade position.
- Maintain control of self-propelled mobile equipment while it is in motion.
- Operating speeds shall be consistent with conditions of roadways, tracks, grades, clearance, visibility, curves, and traffic.
- Operate equipment within its designed limitations. Slow down or drop to a lower gear when necessary. Post areas where lower speeds are warranted.
- Always wear a seat belt when operating self-propelled mobile equipment.