Don’t Get Caught-in-Between

Caught-in-between accidents are far too common even though they should be easy to avoid. Caught-in-between hazards include: mobile or moving equipment (cranes, suspended loads, forklifts, etc.), points of operation in machines, gears, pulleys, belts, and other moving parts. Sometimes even parts that aren’t supposed to move are dangerous.

There are a variety of actions you can take to avoid getting caught:

Proper use. Never operate a piece of equipment or use a machine unless you have been properly trained and you are authorized to use it.

Where are you? Pay attention to where you are. If you’re a pedestrian, make sure you don’t walk or stand where a moving object or machine can crush you against something else. If you’re an operator, be keenly aware of pedestrians in the area.

Warnings are there for a reason. Obey warnings like signs, lights, barricades, and fences. Don’t get close to machines that are moving, especially automated machines and robots. Before you get close, make sure the machines are shut down and that your lock is locking out the power source.

Physically prevent contact. Barricade keep-out zones, exclusion zones, and the swing radius of every crane. Barricades are much better than tape or cones because barricades are meant to prevent people from walking into a danger zone, not just show them that there is a hazard in a certain area.

Lockout/tagout. Understand—really understand—when you need to use lockout/tagout, then follow the procedures to the letter. Remember that lockout/tagout includes the concepts of blocking and bracing. Injuries and fatalities can occur when gravity pulls raised parts (like loader buckets, booms, etc.) down onto people who are working on the equipment. Proper blocking and/or bracing will prevent any movement even if a jack slips or hydraulic pressure is lost.

Don’t get sucked in. Conveyors and some machines can pull you in and crush you or parts of your body. Avoid getting caught by tucking in your shirt, removing jewelry, not wearing clothes with drawstrings, and keeping long hair and beards tied up, back, and out of the way.

Caught-in-between accidents are often fatal. You have to avoid these accidents the first time, and every time if you are planning to stay alive.

Notes

Never operate a machine without making certain that all guards are in place.