Big Bundle of Pipe Falls on Truck Driver



A truck driver was killed when a bundle of plastic irrigation pipe he was securing slipped, striking him in the head. A forklift operator placed four bundles of pipe onto the victim’s semi-trailer bed. The victim threw four fabric straps across the pipe to secure these bundles but did not tighten them. The forklift operator placed four more bundles directly on top of the bottom four and left to load another truck. The victim tightened the first strap closest to the cab on the driver’s side, then moved to the next strap. While using a torque bar to tighten the strap, the movement of the bottom bundle caused the upper bundle to slide off, striking the victim in the head, landing on top of the victim from the waist up.

About 15 minutes later the forklift operator noticed the bundle missing and laying on the ground and went to his supervisor’s office and reported the incident. The supervisor ran out to the yard, assessed the situation and ran back into his office to call for help. Local emergency personnel responded and transported the victim to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Similar fatalities can be prevented by training in safe use of forklifts, training in proper loading and securing of product and clear communication between workers.