Nursery Laborer Dies in Skid-Steer Loader



A 24-year-old nursery laborer had been on the job for just three days when he died of a traumatic injury to the brain.

The skid-steer operator had been moving metal carts containing plants to the greenhouse. He'd been moving the carts for several hours before he was noticed missing. He was found in a seated position in the operator's cage of the skid steer with a severe head injury. His coat had been placed across his lap to protect his pants from the rain. A pocket of the coat was caught on the skid-steer's operational hand controls.

Investigators believe that the operator approached the greenhouse with a new load, but the door was shut. It was a rainy and windy day, and investigators suspect that the victim decided to jump out of the skid steer to open the door, without shutting off the power. As he started to exit the loader, the victim's coat caught the still-active controls. The machine jolted forward and the sudden movement caused his head to forcefully strike the left-front roll bar.

Remember to not operate equipment with loose clothing, a tool belt or any other item that could interfere with or entangle operator controls. Also, before leaving the operator's cage, shut down and turn off the power completely.