Unloading Trailers (Construction)



FACTS

INJURY FACTS

If items are not properly secured at all stages, they may shift, fall, or break free, causing a variety of injuries including:

1. **Head and back trauma.** Steel beams, pipes, lumber, drums, bricks, and other falling objects can cause devastating injuries if they are not properly secured.
2. **Hand and finger injuries.** Workers may suffer crush injuries to their limbs if a line breaks or their hands are caught in pinch points while moving heavy objects.
3. **Eye injuries.** Unsecured loads of nails, sand, or gravel may split and pour over workers, sending hazardous particles into unprotected eyes.
4. **Foot fractures.** Even a single loose brick can be dangerous if it strikes a worker’s foot, causing toe and metatarsal fractures that can put him out of work for weeks.
5. **Vehicle injuries.** Many accidents result from a sudden unfastening of chains or securing straps around logs, pallets, and other loads on truck beds.
6. **Electrocution.** Improper loading of cranes and boom trucks can cause loads or equipment to make contact with power lines, resulting in electrocution or severe electrical shocks.
7. **Death.** Many fatalities result from a worker being trapped between a stationary object and an unsecured load, causing crush injuries or suffocation.

STATS

- Between 1992 and 2003, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 63 deaths of workers involved in loading and unloading construction equipment from flatbed trailers. The CDC reports that over 30% of the 1,021 forklift related deaths involved pedestrian workers being crushed by falling cargo or crushed by the forklift operator during loading and unloading operations.
- Incidents have occurred during loading, and unloading operations include workers falling from trailers, overturning of trucks or trailers, brake failures, and failure to properly secure loads. According to Global incident statistics the percentage of falls from trucks and trailers occurred as follows: 60% from the trailer, 8% from the tailgate and 7 % from the roof and 25% from the cab.
- The three most common activities associated with truck and trailer incidents are: Loading and unloading (49%), loads improperly secured (21%), cleaning or maintenance tasks (15%) and forward or reverse traveling (15%).

- According to a U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics database, an average of nine construction workers were killed each year while loading and unloading mobile equipment from flatbed trucks and trailers. Loading appears to be more dangerous than unloading, as 70 percent of the all deaths occurred while loading mobile equipment.