

Chaser Dies When Crushed between Yarder and Stump

Task: Working at landing

Occupation: Chaser

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A 49-year-old logger working as a chaser at a landing died when the yarder superstructure rotated and crushed him between the counterweight and a stump. On the day of the incident, a three man cable logging crew that included a choker setter, yarder operator, and a chaser was working at a site. The yarder was a tracked shovel converted to a yarder, also known as a yoader. The yarder operator and chaser both had 20 years of logging experience. After a turn of logs was yarded to the machine, the operator would then swing the superstructure and boom to the right and place the turn on the cold deck behind the yarder. The chaser would then unbell the chokers from the logs. When the boom of the yarder was aligned with the yarding road line, three inches of clearance remained between the yarder's counterweight and a rotten old growth stump. The chaser had a safe area near the stump which was outside the yarder's swing radius and where he went when the yarder was in motion. At this location he was visible to the operator. The last time the operator saw the chaser he was standing in his safe area. The operator's station, or cab, on this type of machinery is located on its left side. The operator brought in a turn to the cold deck, which required the yarder superstructure to rotate nearly 180 degrees to the right. When he set down the turn, he noticed the chaser was lying on the ground behind the yarder near the stump. Investigators believe that the chaser noticed the yarder's right rear compartment door, which is in the operator's blind spot, had come open and that he had tried to close the door. As he was attempting to close the door, the yarder rotated and he was caught in the pinch point between the stump and the open door and counterweight. The open door was ripped off as it struck the stump and he came to rest on top of it. He died at the scene.



Safety Requirements

- Employees must approach the hazardous pinch point area only after informing the operator of that intent and receiving acknowledgment from the operator that the operator understands the employee's intention. All logging machines must be stopped while any employee is in the hazardous pinch point area. See WAC 296-54-573(24).
- An unimpaired horizontal clearance of at least three feet must be maintained between the rotating superstructure of any logging machine working on a landing and any adjacent object or surface. If this clearance cannot be maintained, a safety zone barrier must be used to isolate the hazardous area. The safety zone barrier may be a warning line constructed of rope or ribbon, supported on stanchions. See WAC 296-54-577(13).

Recommended Safe Practices

- Communication between landing workers and the operators of machinery is essential to prevent injuries, especially when the operator cannot see the worker or the task is not routine.
- Do not allow employees to work in a machine operator's blind area.

Resources*

- Free workplace safety and health consultations are available from L&I at: www.SafetyConsult.Lni.wa.gov
- Free video from Labor and Industries: Be Safe in the Woods at: www.LNI.BeSafeintheWoods
- Free handbook from Oregon OSHA: Yarding and Loading Handbook at: www.OR.OSHA.YardingandLoading
- Free handbook on cable yarding systems by WorkSafe BC at: www.worksafeBC.CableYardingSystems
- Free video on finding a safe position while cable yarding by WorkSafe BC at: www2.WorkSafeBC.SafePosition

*These internet links have been shortened for publication and will not operate in your web browser as written. To access these resources, please go to the SHARP publications page at www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/Pubs/, click on *Logging*, open this document and follow the links from there. Prepared by Randy Clark, WA State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. The FACE Program is supported in part by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH grant# 5 U60 OH008487-09).

Logging Safety Training Attendance Roster

Date: _____ Subject: _____ Location: _____

Trainer: _____ Trainer title: _____

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	SIGNATURE	COMPANY	JOB TITLE

Safety training attendance roster reviewed by _____ date _____