

Rigging Slinger Struck by Carriage When Skyline Drops

Task: Setting chokers **Occupation:** Rigging slinger/Choker setter **Release Date:** 2022

In January of 2022, a 31-year-old rigging slinger died after the carriage struck him when the skyline dropped. The incident happened at a cable logging site. The rigging slinger walked down the hill from the landing, after helping with a road change, to the location where chokers were already being set. He started the process of setting chokers. A second rigging slinger had already stopped the carriage in that location and had started setting chokers off to the side of the skyline. The rigging slinger was retrieving a choker from under the skyline. At the same time, the hooktender was on the yarder speaking to the yarder operator. Suddenly, the skyline dropped 45 feet, allowing the Boman carriage to strike the rigging slinger, fatally injuring him. Investigators were not definitively able to determine why the skyline dropped. Factors that may have contributed to this incident include maintenance issues with the yarder's braking system as well as distraction of the yarder operator.



Boman carriage that fell when the skyline dropped and fatally struck the rigging slinger.

Safety Requirements

- Each machine, including any machine provided by an employee, must be maintained in serviceable condition and the following:
 - (a) Each machine must be inspected before initial use during each work shift. Defects or damage must be repaired or the unserviceable machine is replaced before beginning work.
 - (b) Operating and maintenance instructions must be available on the machine or in the area where the machine is being operated. Each machine operator and maintenance employee must comply with the operating and maintenance instructions. See [WAC 296-54-573\(9\)\(a\)\(b\)](#)

Recommended Safe Practices

- When retrieving chokers from the carriage drop line, always pull them off to the side to untangle and separate them. Avoid being directly under the carriage and skyline whenever possible.
- Never allow workers on the yarder during operation, as they may distract operators, causing them to inadvertently activate controls. This prohibition was stated in the yarder's operator manual, as it is in most operator manuals.
- Ensure that all yarder braking systems are properly maintained and functioning as required.

