



Man dies in accident at Great Falls job site

By CHELSI MOY
Tribune Staff Writer
November 2, 2005

A Great Falls man died Wednesday evening of injuries suffered earlier in the day in a construction accident, according to police.

Around 8 a.m., police responded to the 1400 block of 28th Street South where construction workers are building a warehouse for Benefis Healthcare.

According to police, a United Materials employee was backing a cement truck up a 10-degree dirt ramp at low speed to pour concrete when the 41-year-old man crossed behind the vehicle.

Police are unsure whether the back tires ran over the Great Falls man, but his jacket got entangled in one of the drive shafts, Lt. Bryan Lockerby said. The man was not identified.

One of about 20 other construction workers at the scene yelled at the driver to stop before the front wheels reached the man.

Guy Tabacco Construction is the lead contractor on the project. Two subcontractors were working on-site at the time of the accident, one being United Materials. The man did not work for United or Guy Tabacco.

Police are doubtful any charges are forthcoming because the incident occurred on private property, alcohol does not appear to be a factor, and there is no indication of any criminal activity, Lockerby said.

"It was an accident," he said.

What can we learn from this accident?

- 1) Only trained, qualified and licensed operators are authorized to operate heavy equipment.
- 2) Always use a spotter while backing stationed safely behind the heavy equipment.
- 3) Driver always pays attention and has view of the spotter and follows their instructions.
- 4) Workers NEVER walk behind backing equipment.
- 5) Spotters immediately STOP truck if anyone moves behind backing equipment.
- 6) Tailgate Meeting on the importance of SAFE BACKING PROCEDURES and ensure everyone understands the hazards of heavy equipment.
- 7) Pay attention – NEVER be complacent around heavy equipment
- 8) Don't make exceptions – This CAN and DOES happen too often.