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SAFETY ALERT

08-S-7

OPERATOR INJURED WHEN SKIDDER APPLYING CHEMICAL OVERTURNS

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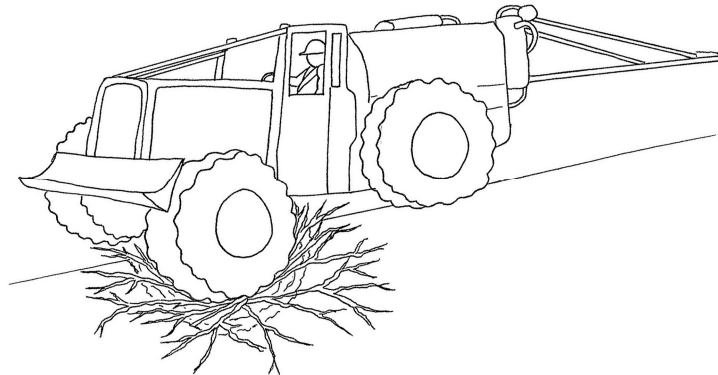
www.forestresources.org/members/serpub/08-s-7.html

BACKGROUND: On a clear, hot summer day in the South, a skidder modified for chemical spraying in site prep operations was performing an herbicide application in a three-year-old pine plantation.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: The site prep skidder operator was in his late 20s and had been employed by the site prep contracting firm for six years. The operator was fully trained and was wearing his seatbelt.

UNSAFE ACT OR CONDITION: The crew had not conducted a careful inspection of stand and terrain conditions, and the skidder operator was unaware of all hazardous situations around him. A deep hole covered by brush was not visible to him.

ACCIDENT: When the site prep crew arrived at the site, crew members reviewed the stand and mapped out a plan for each operator to apply the chemical. The skidder operator had been driving up and down one part of the stand because the ground was relatively steep. This operator then began driving on the contour of the slope, because it had started to level out. A drain was located at the end of the spraying row but was hidden by residual brush. One tire on the skidder rolled into the drain and the skidder overturned. As the skidder overturned, the operator hit his shoulder on the door latch.



INJURY: The operator's shoulder impact with the door latch resulted in a sprained shoulder, requiring a sling and anti-inflammatory and pain medication. The operator lost one day of work due to the injury.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION: Operators should inspect stand and terrain conditions prior to beginning operations and remain aware of any hazards detected. The latch on the skidder door has been modified and relocated to prevent a similar injury in the future.

Reviewed by:

Jason Cutshall

Southcentral Region Manager

Please follow equipment manufacturers' recommendations for safe operation and maintenance procedures.