

The other operator did not see the accident happen, but heard a loud noise as the lift fell on its side. He ran over to the lift and assisted the forklift operator out of the lift from the right side door. The operators contacted their immediate supervisor who arrived at the scene at approximately 0920 hours. After assessing the condition of the forklift operator, the supervisor then called the Plant Shift Superintendent (PSS) at approximately 0925 hours. The PSS responded promptly and took charge of the accident scene. Plant heavy equipment operators were called to the scene and were able to right the overturned forklift at approximately 1025 hours. The lift was removed from the ditch at approximately 1230 hours and towed to the plant garage for inspection. Spill pads were placed in the ditch to absorb a small amount of diesel fuel which had leaked from the forklift while it was overturned. The forklift was taken out of service for inspection by garage personnel. The inspection revealed that there was hydraulic oil leaking in the brake drum of the left front wheel.

ANALYSIS: Based on a written statement from the LMUS garage supervisor, the left front brake drum was contaminated with hydraulic oil resulting from a seal failure. In addition, the brake drum had dried oil on it, indicating the leak had begun prior to this workday but was not noticeable when the pre-job inspection was performed. This forklift had been in use just prior to this incident without indication of a brake problem. The root and direct causes of the incident were both determined to be a failed part.

Since the rear wheels were still on a hard surface when the skid mark began, if both brakes had functioned properly the lift would have been stopped before coming in contact with the soft portion of the shoulder and the incident would not have occurred.

RESOLUTION/RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: The forklift incident, the need for hazard awareness and thorough pre-operational vehicle checks have been reviewed with Waste Operators. Stop work authority for maintenance problems has been reiterated. A program has been established to maintain preventative maintenance records for vendor-supplied heavy equipment. Safety Representatives have been assigned to field offices to provide oversight in monitoring safety processes.

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PRIORITY DESCRIPTOR: Blue/Information

KEYWORDS: Forklift, overturn, brake failure, preventive maintenance

REFERENCES: ORO-BJC-PGDPENVRES-1998-0009

DOE FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES: Occupational Safety & Health, Conduct of Operations, Maintenance, Safety

BJC FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES: SH - Safety & Health, OP - Conduct of Operations

HAZARDS: n/a

WORK ACTIVITY: Waste Management

FOLLOW-UP ACTION: Information in this report is accurate to the best of our knowledge. As means of measuring effectiveness of this report please notify Emily J. Blasdel at (502) 441-5163, e-mail at ejd@ornl.gov of any action taken as a result of this report or of any technical inaccuracies you find. Your feedback is important and appreciated.

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