

Front End Loader in water pit incident

WHAT HAPPENED

A front end loading shovel (FEL), entered a small water pit when the operator drove over a storm drain cover. This pit was situated along one edge of the yard and was adjoining a storm drain that connects to a nearby stream. The weight of the FEL caused the drain cover to collapse which in-turn caused the FEL to lean at a dangerous angle, presenting the potential of it tipping over.

An investigation established the following root causes;

- Limited all-round visibility – operator failed to see the drain cover under surface water
- Lack of adequate edge protection around water pit
- FEL fitted with standard vision mirrors only - wide angle convex mirrors should have been installed as well
- Contracted operator did not possess MPQC card or evidence of competencies concerning the operation of a FEL.



LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

Following the incident on site, the FEL was turned off and the operator evacuated. The area was cordoned off to stop any entry and the machine was removed by a hired in heavy recovery truck. The driver was debriefed about the incident and completed a drugs and alcohol check.

The following recommendations will be actioned;

- Edge protection around water pit to be improved FEL to be fitted with wide angle convex mirrors as well as standard vision mirrors
- An All Round Vision Assessment will be completed.
- Remind operators to never enter flooded areas unless they know what is beneath the surface
- Checks to ensure that all operators have undergone the required training and possess recognised competencies such as MPQC.

LOCATION: READYMIX OR MORTAR PLANT
ACTIVITY: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
SUB ACTIVITY: ON-HIGHWAY

ALERT STATUS: High Potential
DATE ISSUED: 04/06/2018 15:29:23
INCIDENT No: 01491