

Local Trucking Without Storage Fatality File



Truck Driver Dies when a Load of Lumber Falls Over and Crushes Him in California

A 47-year-old male truck driver (the victim) died when a load of lumber he was delivering fell over and crushed him. The victim had delivered the lumber to a residential neighborhood where a large family home was being built. The contractor at the jobsite stated that the victim had rolled the lumber (plywood) off the back of the truck, and that the wood had landed vertically on the pavement. The load contained 174 sheets of plywood and weighed 10,022 pounds. The victim got out of the truck and spoke briefly with the contractor before returning to the area where the plywood was located. The contractor last saw the victim crouching beside the lumber which was leaning at approximately a 60 degree angle. He thought the victim may have been placing a couple of two-by-fours (stickers) under the stacks of plywood just before the stack of plywood fell on top of him. The contractor heard a loud crash and felt the vibration when the plywood hit the ground. He discovered the victim beneath the stack of plywood and called out for help from some of his workers. The workers came over to assist the victim using a car jack and two 4" by 8" inch pieces of lumber to lift the plywood from the victim. Paramedics were summoned to the scene and the victim was pronounced dead at the scene.

The FACE investigator concluded that, in order to prevent similar future occurrences, employers should:

- consider equipping their trucks with forklifts or bed-mounted cranes so that heavy loads of lumber can be safely unloaded.
- provide formal safety training for truck drivers and educate them about the potential hazards of their jobs, in particular, those associated with unstable loads.
- consider purchasing trucks that allow a load of lumber to be unloaded at a delivery site in a controlled manner.

Source: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov>