Worker struck by cedar slab during log loading

Location: British Columbia

Date of Incident: July 2016

Incident Summary: A log loader operator had just finished loading salvaged logs onto a logging truck as part of a roadside log-salvaging operation. The truck driver was standing next to the logging truck. A cedar slab weighing about 380 pounds fell from the top of the load and struck the truck driver, who sustained serious injuries.

WorkSafeBC Investigation Conclusions:

Cause: Worker in active loading zone. A log loader had just finished putting salvaged logs onto a logging truck and trailer. Before the loader operator lowered his grapple to the ground to signal that loading was complete, the truck driver moved to stand beside the rear of the truck cab to begin putting binders on the load.

While the truck driver was near the rear of the cab, the loader operator was swinging the boom toward the side of the truck where the truck driver was standing.

As the operator was swinging the boom, he noticed a slab of wood sticking out of the load and moved the loader’s grapple toward the slab to adjust it. Just then, the slab slid off the truck, striking the truck driver, who sustained serious injuries.

Contributing Factors:

- Worker did not follow safe work instructions. The truck driver had attended a worker discussion where the prime contractor gave specific instructions that truck drivers were to stay in their trucks during loading and unloading procedures. Contrary to the instructions, the truck driver moved next to the log trailer while log loading was underway.

- Work activities not coordinated. The prime contractor did not coordinate the work of the loader operator and truck driver, and failed to ensure that these workers followed safe work procedures while loading the salvaged logs.

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