

Caught-Between and Crush Points

About 9 minutes to deliver

The fourth of the Focus Four. Between a machine and a wall, inside a trench, under a load — the hazard defined by where you are standing.

Struck-by is being hit by something moving. Caught-between is being crushed, pinched or squeezed between two things, and it is the one people walk into rather than get hit by. It is the fourth of OSHA's Focus Four, and it kills quietly — one worker, one bad place to stand.

THE PLACES IT HAPPENS

- Between a machine and something solid. A wall, a stack, a parked truck, another machine. The swing radius of an excavator counterweight is the classic: it sweeps a full circle and there is no gap left behind it.
- In a trench. A cave-in is a caught-between fatality — a cubic yard of soil weighs about as much as a car. Protective systems under 1926.652 are what stand between a crew and that.
- Under or against a load. Suspended, being landed, being unstrapped from a truck bed, or leaning against a rack.
- Inside a machine. Rollers, gears, belts, augers, conveyors — anything that keeps turning after it takes hold of a glove.
- Under an unsupported vehicle. Jacks fail. Stands do not.

STANDING IN THE WRONG PLACE

Most of these come down to position, so most of them are preventable by moving.

- Never between a moving or reversing machine and a fixed object. That gap is where spotters and ground workers die.
- Barricade the swing radius, and treat the barricade as a wall.
- Stand to the side of a load being landed, never between it and anything.
- Never reach into a machine that is only switched off. Locked out, stored energy released, then reach.
- Cribbing and stands before anyone goes underneath. A raised bed, bucket or blade is held up by hydraulic pressure, and pressure leaks.

TRENCHES

Five feet is the trigger for a protective system, but 1926.652(a)(1) is conditional even below that — an excavation under five feet still needs one unless a competent person examines the ground and finds no indication of a potential cave-in. The belief that under five feet is automatically fine is wrong, and it is a common way people end up buried to the waist.

ASK THE CREW

- Where on this site could somebody end up between a machine and something solid?
- Is the swing radius barricaded, and does anyone cross it?
- Is anything raised right now that is held up only by hydraulics?

29 CFR 1926.652 · 29 CFR 1926.601 · 29 CFR 1910.147

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Caught-Between and Crush Points

About 9 minutes to deliver · 29 CFR 1926.652 · 29 CFR 1926.601 · 29 CFR 1910.147

Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
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I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

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