Injury to head due to fall from Ladder

Job and Circumstances

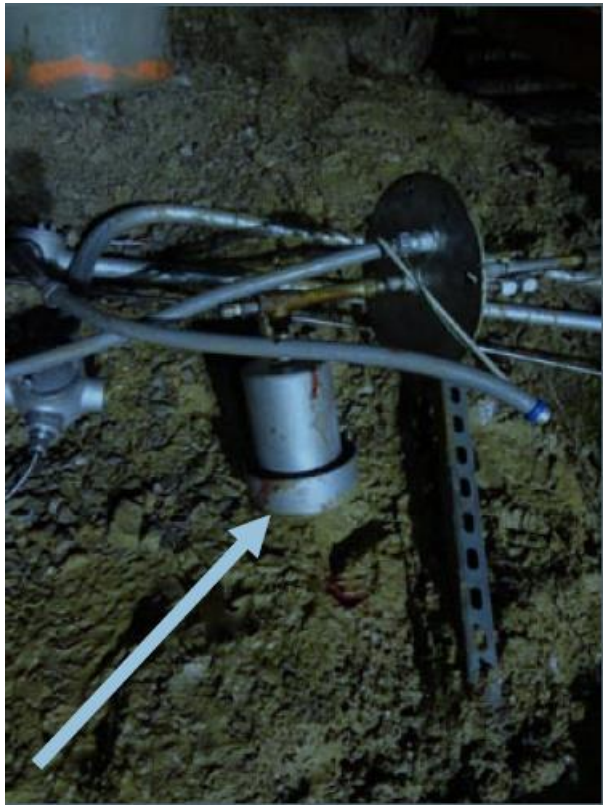
- The accident happened on Sunday November 20, 2011 at 10.20 PM. The temperature was 60 ºF (about 15 ºC) and approximately 0.48” (12 mm) of rain had fallen throughout the day.
- Two employees attempted to set up the first of 17 shots for radiographic testing in an elevated pipe line area.
- The working surfaces consisted of a muddy area with equipment in the immediate area and a concrete pad with some mud, loose sand and open to the rain.
- The employees had a choice of a ladder or boom lift to complete their work. For time, the employees chose to use a ladder due to the amount of welds waiting to RT and the time of night.
- Lighting did not appear to be a factor.

Accident and Consequences

- The injured employee was ascending the ladder and was handed the camera at about half the distance to the working elevation. When the injured employee reached the working elevation, grabbed the camera with both hands at his left side and attempted to heft the camera onto the wood platform. This sudden weight shift caused the ladder to push back and to break away from its footing.
- As the ladder fell the injured employee attempted to grab onto the piping. The injured employee slipped and fell from the piping landing head first on unknown object(s) causing injuries to his head.
- The injured employee was transported by private vehicle to the hospital for treatment and was diagnosed with multiple subdural hematomas and a fracture of the skull. No other injuries were incurred.
- The location at the worksite where the accident happened is shown in the picture.

Contributing factors

- There was a great deal of equipment and supplies in the work area, which made it difficult to properly utilize the boom lift without difficulty.
- The ladder used as a work platform had not been tied off at any point of the ladder.
- A sudden shift in weight appears to be the factor that caused the slippage of the ladder.
- The injured employee's feet were approximately 6 feet (1.8 meters) above the ground prior to the fall.
- The object that was hit by the injured persons head is shown in the picture.



Lesson Learned

- It was found that the proper piece of equipment would have been the supplied boom lift (see the picture)
- A ladder was utilized for ease and speed. It appears that a proper angle was not utilized with the ladder which contributed to the footing failure, along with the rain and mud at its base.
- If the proper piece of equipment had been used, this accident would not have occurred.