

No job is more important.



Safety Alert

N°1 2003

Forest Machine Fire



Details

An operator was investigating the source of smoke coming from the underbody of a forestry excavator feller buncher. When he lifted the engine bonnet a fireball occurred, which burned the operator and destroyed the machine.

Contributing Factors

An investigation into this accident revealed that:

- small twigs and leaves (fine litter) were able to penetrate hot areas of the machine
- no automatic fire suppression system was installed on the machine.

Recommendations


- That modifications to the machine, in consultation with the manufacturer, be considered to restrict fine litter entering hot areas.
- That operators undertake daily checks of machinery and remove any combustible material from hot areas.
- That maintenance programs include a detailed search for, and removal of, accumulated combustible material and, if warranted, include a thorough wash down of the machine.
- That approved automatic fire suppression systems be fitted to machines working in this environment.
- That operators be trained in machine fire fighting techniques.
- That when the source of a machinery fire is not known, extreme care be exercised in determining its location.
- That appropriate portable fire extinguishers, capable of combating electrical and other fires that may occur on the machinery, be installed.

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February 2003