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**EMERGENCY AWARENESS BULLETIN**  
**No. 3 – 2026**

**Kentucky Division of Mine Safety Fatality No. 1 – Machinery**

On Wednesday, May 20, 2026, a 25-year-old equipment service technician with approximately 6-years of mining experience was fatally injured while working at a surface mine in the Hazard Branch.

The accident occurred while the mechanic was conducting an engine swap to a front-end loader. While attempting to remove the radiator guard, the counterweight unexpectedly fell, striking the victim and resulting in blunt force trauma-type injuries.

***The Accident Scene***



**Recommendations**

1. **Adhere to manufacturer requirements** — All maintenance, repair, and disassembly tasks must strictly follow the equipment manufacturer's specifications, torque values, lifting points, and counterweight-handling procedures.
2. **Review procedures before major work** — Before beginning any major mechanical work, crews must conduct a detailed review of the complete assembly and/or disassembly sequence, including identifying heavy components, potential stored-energy hazards, and requirements on blocking or lifting equipment.

3. **Secure equipment against movement** — All parked equipment undergoing repair must be properly wheel-chocked, and every raised, suspended, or detachable component must be positively blocked, cribbed, or mechanically secured to prevent unintended movement or release.
4. **Plan maintenance work thoroughly** — All maintenance activities must be fully planned prior to starting work. Planning must include hazard identification, required tools, lifting devices, blocking materials, personnel roles, communication steps, and verification of safe-work procedures.