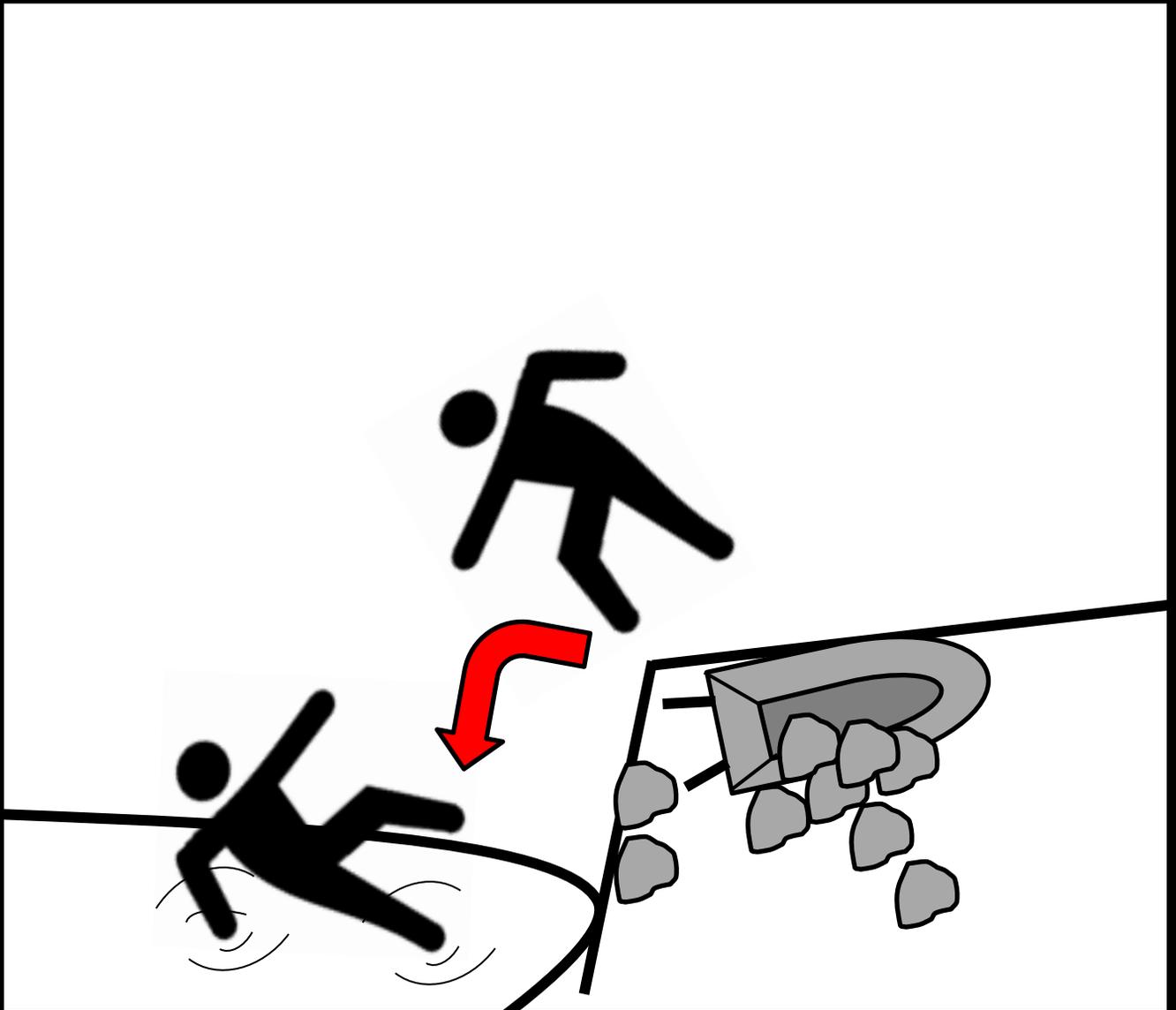


**FATAL HAZARD**



**When working near the edge of the water**

- **Wear personal flotation devices**
- **Have grab lines, life preservers or rings in immediate area**

## Hispanic Laborer Drowns After Falling into Landscaping Pond

**INSTRUCTIONS: Hold the guide with this side facing you and the other side facing your crew. Then read the story.**

Our safety talk today is about a 23-year-old Hispanic day laborer who drowned after falling into a landscape pond. Employees arrived that day expecting to rototill some land on the property. When the equipment did not arrive as expected, they were instructed by the property owner to place rock around the pond. Safety positioning ropes, which had previously been used by the workers to prevent falls into the empty pond, were not immediately available.

The victim was placing rocks around the pond to prevent erosion and sediment buildup. A wheelbarrow filled with rocks tipped over and the victim may have lost his footing and slipped into the pond while avoiding the falling rocks. His coworker attempted to grab his hand but he was pulled into the water as well. Neither of them could swim. The coworker managed to get out of the water, however the victim did not. His body was found by a dive team 47 minutes after the initial 911 call.

**So here are some ways we can prevent something like this from happening where we work.**

- Make sure that floatation devices, fall prevention, and grab lines are worn or in the immediate area when working on or near the edge of the water, where danger of drowning exists.
- Train workers on basic safety and lifesaving skills before working over, or near water.
- Re-evaluate the work environment for hazards when work tasks or site conditions change.
- Consider different tools or equipment if standard equipment is impractical or unsafe.. A four-wheeled cart or wheelbarrow may have provided greater stability on the inclined bank

**ASK: “Does anyone have more ideas or comments to share?”**  
**Pause for discussion. Then see if there are ways to take action.**

**END WITH ACTION PLAN (ideas for what to ask or say).**

- Are there conditions or tasks which should be re-evaluated for hazards?
- Are there tasks that could be made safer with different tools?
- What would you do if your co-worker had an emergency?.
- Express your commitment to re-evaluate hazards in the work environment when tasks or conditions change. Commit to follow-up at the next safety talk.