

Truck Driver Struck by Yard Tractor on Rainy Night

INCIDENT FACTS

REPORT #: 71-214-2022s

REPORT DATE: January 18, 2022

INCIDENT DATE: October 12, 2015

WORKER: 56 years old

OCCUPATION: Semi-truck driver

INDUSTRY: General freight trucking, long distance, truckload

SCENE: Trucking terminal yard

EVENT TYPE: Struck by vehicle



A 56-year-old truck driver was killed when a yard tractor struck him as he was walking in his employer's terminal yard.

The incident occurred on a rainy night. The truck driver was walking diagonally southwest across the paved yard from the trailer staging area to the warehouse. At the same time, a yard tractor, also called a hostler, was pulling a loaded trailer eastward at ten miles per hour toward the southeast corner of the warehouse and the truck driver's path.

A crosswalk led from the warehouse corner to an employee parking lot that adjoined the staging area where the tractor was headed to drop off the trailer. Its headlights were on as it drove through the yard, which was poorly lit by an older lighting system.

When the tractor reached the corner, it turned north and slowed as it neared the crosswalk. The tractor driver looked both ways for pedestrians. He then drove on and struck the truck driver who was in a dark area near the crosswalk. Realizing that something happened, the driver stopped the tractor, shut it down, and exited it to find the truck driver on the ground with severe head injuries. The fatally hurt driver died shortly after at the hospital.

Investigators found:

- 1) The employer did not require workers to wear high visibility reflective clothing during hours of darkness in the terminal yard. Pockets of darkness combined with the glare of light halos and reflections on wet pavement made it hard to see the truck driver walking in the yard.
- 2) The employer lacked an Accident Prevention Program (APP) with job hazard assessment policies and procedures to determine what Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be used to help prevent vehicle struck by incidents in dark and rainy conditions.

FATALITY NARRATIVE



Photo 1. Front view of yard tractor that struck the truck driver who was walking in the terminal yard.



Photo 2. Side view of the yard tractor with trailer that struck the truck driver walking in the terminal yard.



Photo 3. Northeast view of terminal yard area where the yard tractor struck the truck driver. The driver was walking toward the crosswalk from the trailer staging area in the background.

Requirements

Employers must:

Ensure that all workers wear high visibility reflective clothing in trucking terminal yards.

See: [WAC 296-800-16040](#)

Requirements

Develop and implement a formal, written APP with pedestrian safety policies, hazard solutions, PPE requirements, and training to prevent struck by incidents in trucking terminal yards.

See: [WAC 296-800-14005](#)

Recommendations

- Create and enforce policies that require workers to wear reflective clothing meeting ANSI “Class 2” standards, or “Class 3” for higher visibility in low light or nighttime conditions.
- Provide waterproof LED headlamps and flashlights to workers to use after dusk or before dawn.
- Install exterior lighting systems that provide uniform lighting with no dark areas and maximum visibility of pedestrians, vehicles, and structures during hours of darkness.

Resources

Use the [TIRES Trucking Safety Program Development Tool](#) to design a written company safety program or APP that includes policies, hazard solutions, PPE requirements, and training to prevent vehicle stuck by incidents in terminal yards and work areas where pedestrian and truck traffic intersect. For more information, read the tool overview on [keeptruckingsafe.org](#).

FATALITY NARRATIVE



This narrative was developed to alert employers and workers of a tragic incident in Washington State and is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.

Developed by the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), Washington State Dept. of Labor & Industries. The FACE Program is supported in part by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH grant# 5U60OH008487). For more information visit www.lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-research/ongoing-projects/work-related-fatalities-face.