

# Fatality Narrative

## Laborer Killed When Run Over by Reversing Dump Truck\*

**Industry:** Highway, street, and bridge construction.

**Occupation:** Laborer/Certified traffic flagger.

**Task:** Coordinating asphalt truck traffic.

**Type of Incident:** Struck by work vehicle/Highway work zone.

**Release Date:** November 24, 2009.

**Case No.:** 08WA03301.

**SHARP Report No.:** 71-87-2009.

On June 23, 2008, a laborer was run over by a backing-up dump truck in a highway work zone. The 49-year-old victim was a laborer and certified traffic flagger employed by an asphalt paving company. The victim was assigned to work as the truck traffic control coordinator or spotter in the truck transfer and staging area at a temporary traffic control work zone where a 2-lane highway was being repaved. The victim used a hand-held CB radio to communicate with the pilot car operator, who was making runs along the road bringing the motoring public past the work zone area. The victim's job was to ensure that traffic flow did not impact the movement of trucks carrying asphalt from the staging area, from the asphalt paver, or departing from the work zone. The driver of a dump truck pulled out from a line of parked trucks, honked the horn twice and began reversing. It was noted that the truck's back-up alarm was working. The victim walked out from behind a parked trailer into the open lane of the road and was attempting to make radio contact with the pilot car operator. The victim was facing away from the backing truck when they were struck and run over.

Photo of incident scene where the victim was struck by the backing dump truck



### Requirements/Recommendations

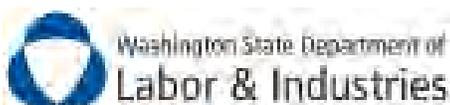
(! Indicates items required by code)

- ! Before backing a dump truck the driver must determine that no one is currently in the backing zone and it is reasonable to expect no one will enter the backing zone while operating the dump truck in reverse.
- ! If workers are in the backing zone or it is reasonable to expect that a worker will enter the backing zone, you must make sure the truck is backed up only when:
  - An observer signals that it is safe to back;
  - Or
  - An operable mechanical device that provides the driver a full view behind the dump truck is used, such as a video camera.
- Ensure communication procedures that do not cause distractions and repositioning of ground workers.
- Position truck control coordinators and other ground workers out of the active traffic lane.
- Paving operations site coordinators need to advise dump truck drivers of their responsibility to be aware of ground workers and other pedestrians and if they lose sight of them to stop and locate them before proceeding.

**State Wide Statistics:** This was the 33<sup>rd</sup> out of 72 work-related fatalities in Washington State during 2008, and was the 7<sup>th</sup> out of 18 construction-related fatalities.

*\*This bulletin was developed at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State. The information in this notice 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.*

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