

# Fatality Narrative

## Worker Changing Flat Tire Struck by Passing Vehicle\*

**Industry:** Garage door installation  
**Occupation:** Installer  
**Task:** Changing flat tire on vehicle  
**Type of Incident:** Struck by motor vehicle

**Release Date:** August 4, 2004  
**Case No.:** 03WA033  
**SHARP Report No.:** 71-21-2004

On July 21, 2003, a garage door installer was struck and killed by a passing motor vehicle while he was changing a flat tire on his vehicle that was parked on the shoulder of a road. The victim was a 46-year-old male employed by a garage door installation company who was driving his pickup truck between jobs when his left rear tire went flat. He pulled his vehicle on to the shoulder of a two-lane rural road and began changing the tire. He was struck by a vehicle that swerved from the lane of traffic onto the shoulder. State Patrol reported that the victim was parked legally and the driver swerved onto the shoulder due to inattentiveness while reaching for an object in the vehicle. This incident happened at about 11:20 AM on a dry, straight roadway with good visibility.

### Requirements/Recommendations

(! Indicates items required by law)

- ! All construction vehicles must be checked at the beginning of each shift to ensure they are in safe operating condition which includes checking tires, brakes and lights.

If your vehicle has a flat tire or a mechanical problem while you are driving:

- Pull the vehicle to the side of the road and as far off the pavement and on to the shoulder as is safely possible.
- Turn the emergency flashers on.
- If possible, angle the vehicle away from traffic and change the tire using the vehicle as a barrier between you and traffic.
- If you cannot safely change the tire without being too close to traffic, remain in your vehicle and call for help.
- Place the hood of your vehicle up as a signal for assistance and to provide warnings to traveling motorists of a vehicle break down.
- Put out reflectorized triangles, pylons or flares behind your vehicle. (Note: Make sure that you have a safety travel kit in your vehicle that contains emergency warning devices for use along the roadside in the event of an emergency)

**State Wide Statistics:** This was the 34<sup>th</sup> out of 74 work-related fatalities in Washington State during the year 2003 and was the 5<sup>th</sup> construction-related fatality of the year.

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*This bulletin was developed at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries to alert employers and employees in a timely manner of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State. We encourage you to consider the above information as you make safety decisions for or recommendations to your company or constituency. 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.*

Developed by the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) and Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) Programs at the WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277, <http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/FACE/>.