

# Roofing Contractor Killed When Parked Flatbed Truck Rolls Backward\*

**Industry:** Roofing

**Occupation:** Owner

**Task:** Driving flatbed truck filled with roofing debris

**Type of Incident:** Run over by parked truck

**Release Date:** November 23, 2004

**Case No.:** 04WA01101

**SHARP Report No.:** 71-28-2004

On February 9, 2004, the owner of a roofing company was killed when a parked flatbed truck rolled backward and ran over him. The victim, a 61-year-old roofing contractor, and his crew had finished removing an old roof from a private residence and the debris had been loaded into the debris box on the back of a tilt-bed truck. The victim started the truck and drove only a few yards before pulling over and parking along the side of the road. He then put the transmission in neutral, left the engine running, and got out of the truck. He went to the back of the vehicle and placed a wheel block behind the left rear tire. The truck began to roll backward towards the victim. He tried to stop it by pushing on the back of the truck with his hands. He slipped underneath the truck and was dragged a short distance before the truck crashed into a parked car. The emergency medical responder declared the victim dead at the scene. An investigation by police determined that the truck was parked on an incline, the emergency brake was inoperative, the two left rear tires (the ones that rolled over the wheel block) had low air pressure, the truck was heavily loaded, and the transmission was set in neutral.

## Requirements/Recommendations

(! Indicates items required by law)

- ! Perform regular vehicle maintenance checks to ensure that the vehicle is in safe operating condition, which includes checking for the proper operation and adjustment of the emergency brake, and checking for proper inflation of all tires.
- ! The parking brake must be capable of safely holding equipment fully-loaded on a grade and the truck should not be loaded beyond its safe rated capacity.
- ! Avoid parking on inclines if at all possible. If it is necessary to park on an incline, the parking brake must be set and the wheels must be chocked to prevent vehicle movement.
- ! When parking on an incline is necessary, turn the front wheels at an angle to the curb or berm so that if the vehicle does roll, it will roll into the curb or berm.
- Chocks should be of sufficient size and configuration to effectively immobilize the vehicle or equipment.
- If parking on an incline is necessary, it is recommended that both a front and back wheel be chocked.
- Under no circumstances should you place your body behind a moving vehicle to try to stop the vehicle from rolling. This will likely result in serious injury or death.

**State Wide Statistics:** This was the 5<sup>th</sup> out of 85 work-related fatalities in Washington State during the year 2004 to date, and was the 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 17 construction-related fatalities during the year to date.

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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>.