

# Fatality Narrative

## Mechanic Crushed Between Bed and Frame of Dump Truck\*

**Industry:** Heavy and civil engineering construction

**Occupation:** Heavy equipment mechanic

**Task:** Adjusting control cable on dump truck

**Type of Incident:** struck by

**Release Date:** April 26, 2006

**Case No.:** 05WA06201

**SHARP Report No.:** 71-46-2006

On October 13, 2005, a heavy equipment maintenance mechanic was killed when the raised bed of a dump truck lowered and crushed him. The 53-year-old victim was employed by a heavy construction company. He had worked as a mechanic in the company's heavy equipment and construction vehicle maintenance repair shop for 12 years, servicing and repairing equipment, and replacing and fabricating components. On the day of the fatal incident, the victim and another employee were servicing a dump truck. They thought their work was completed but then realized that they needed to adjust a control cable. To access this cable they raised the bed of the truck and went up onto the truck's frame. They did not use, as they had earlier in the day, the truck's installed safety pole which is used during servicing to prevent the accidental lowering of the bed. According to the surviving employee, their work was only going to take about a minute. The victim was sitting on the frame of the truck adjusting the cable when he realized that the bed was about to come down and yelled at his coworker to get off the bed. The coworker escaped without injury, but the victim was struck and crushed by the falling bed.

### Requirements/Recommendations

(! Indicates items required by law)

- ! Employers must make sure that dump trucks have a device installed on the bed that will hold the bed in position while employees are underneath.
- ! Employees must always block the truck or trailer dump bed with an approved device before they place their body between the bed and the frame, even if the work they are performing will only take a few seconds or minutes.
- ! Employers must assure that employees are trained in hazard assessment and control of potential energy sources.
- ! Potential energy sources (mechanical, pneumatic, hydraulic, thermal, electrocution, gravity, and others) must be secured during maintenance, and in a manner that cannot be disabled without knowledge of the person performing the maintenance.
- Employers/dump truck owners should call the truck's manufacturer and / or distributor if safety devices are not installed on their truck. Do not install home made or make-shift devices. Safety devices need to be engineered to able to deal with the energy and forces that can be generated by the bed and bed load.

**State Wide Statistics:** This was the 65<sup>th</sup> out of 79 work-related fatalities in Washington State during 2005, and was the 6<sup>th</sup> out of 9 construction-related fatalities.

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*\*This bulletin was developed at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries to alert employers and employee 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) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) at the WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. The FACE Program is supported by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). 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>.

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Figure 1. The truck after the incident with the bed raised and safety pole in place.

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