



FATALITY NARRATIVE

Laborer Run Over by Reversing Dump Truck in Highway Work Zone*

Industry: Highway, street, and bridge construction
Task: Directing operator of pavement grinder
Occupation: Construction laborer/Groundman
Type of Incident: Struck by/Run over

Release Date: April 10, 2012
Incident Date: July 9, 2011
Case No.: 11WA02401
SHARP Report No.: 71-109-2012

On July 9, 2011, a construction laborer/groundman was struck and killed by a reversing dump truck in a highway construction work zone. The 52-year-old victim worked for a construction company subcontracted to replace asphalt on a state highway. The process involved using a pavement grinder to remove the old asphalt. The grinder then deposited the asphalt in the back of a dump truck. When the dump truck was full the grinder would back up so a sweeper could clean up material. An empty dump truck would then back up to the grinder to continue the process. The highway was a four-lane road divided by Jersey barriers with two lanes in each direction. Prior to the incident the victim was part of a night crew working in the closed right lane of the highway. The victim was working as a groundman by walking alongside the pavement grinder and guiding the operator. At 10:36 p.m., a reversing dump truck ran over the victim as the crew was repositioning the grinder. The incident was unobserved and it is uncertain what the victim was doing at the time. An investigation found that the dump truck's lights, mirrors, and back up alarm were in working order.



Requirements

- Before backing a dump truck the driver must determine that no one is currently in the backing zone and it is reasonable to expect that no employee(s) will enter the backing zone while operating a dump truck in reverse. See WAC 296-155-610.
- Workers exposed to vehicle traffic or moving equipment must wear proper high visibility garments, for night time ANSI class 2 is the minimum requirement. See WAC 296-155-200.
- 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 that the truck is backed only when:
 - An observer signals 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. See WAC 296-155-610.

Recommendations

- Develop and use a lighting plan for night projects in highway work zones to describe lighting sources, locations, and levels. Control glare from direct or reflected light to avoid blinding workers or motorists. See ANSI A10.47-2009 Work Zone Safety for Highway Construction.
- Develop and use an Internal Traffic Control Plan to coordinate the safe flow and interaction of construction equipment, construction vehicles, and workers on foot within the work zone.

State Wide Statistics: This was number 21 of 51 work-related fatalities in Washington State during 2011, and was number 2 of 6 construction-related fatalities.

*This bulletin was developed to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker 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.

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