

Driver Run Over by Semi-Trailer at Truck Stop

INCIDENT FACTS

REPORT #: 71-252-2024s

REPORT DATE: April 1, 2024

INCIDENT DATE: June 1, 2023

WORKER: 71 years old

INDUSTRY: Specialized freight trucking

OCCUPATION: Semi-Truck Driver

SCENE: Truck stop parking lot

EVENT TYPE: Caught between – run over



FATALITY NARRATIVE



A 71-year-old truck driver died after being crushed by a trailer while walking back to his cab in a truck stop parking lot. His employer was a small, local specialized freight trucking company.

On the day of the incident, the driver had made a freight delivery at a warehouse distribution center and drove to a nearby 24-hour truck stop for a long rest break. It was around noon, a peak time for customers at the business. The driver pulled his truck into a vacant parking slot, set the brake, shut the engine off, and walked to the store to pay the parking fee. Another truck was parked in the slot to his left. The close proximity of the trucks left only a small, narrow space between them.

FATALITY NARRATIVE



The driver returned from the store a few minutes later and walked between the trucks to get to his cab. The truck parked next to his suddenly pulled forward and turned left, which made the rear of its trailer pivot and sweep into the space where the driver was walking. The moving trailer struck the driver, pinned him against his trailer, and ran over him with its rear right wheels. First responders pronounced him dead at the scene.

Following the incident, investigators found:

- The employer did not have an accident prevention program (APP).
- The driver was not provided safety orientation training specific to the types of workplace hazards.
- The truck stop had only straight back-in parking slots that limited visibility and space between trucks.



Photo 1. Deceased driver's truck with bumper damage caused by the trailer that ran over him.

FATALITY NARRATIVE



Photo 2. Area where driver was run over.

Requirements

Employers must:

- You must establish, supervise and enforce an accident prevention program (APP) that is effective in practice. (You may call this your total safety and health plan.)
See [WAC 296-800-140](#)

Recommendations

FACE investigators concluded that, to help prevent similar occurrences, employers should:

- Assist drivers with pre-trip planning, including finding truck stops and rest areas with safe truck parking.
- Develop a clearly written accident prevention program (APP) with truck parking area safety policies and training. The policies and training should instruct drivers, whenever possible, to:
 - Park in brightly lit areas, wear a hi-visibility reflective vest, and use a flashlight or blinking light pendant during hours of darkness.
 - Put away phones and electronic devices and always maintain situational awareness in parking areas.

Recommendations

- Avoid unnecessarily walking between parked trucks, especially when the space between them is less than 8 feet wide.
- Inform drivers in adjacent parking slots before doing a walk-around vehicle inspection.
- Walk as far away from traffic as possible, especially near parking lot entrances or at the end of the rows where there is a greater risk of being struck.

Recommendations

- Use 45-degree angle herringbone drive-through (HDT) parking slots instead of straight back-in slots (SBI). HDT slots allow trucks to enter and leave without having to back up. This lets drivers see the entire parking slot and the edges of adjacent slots. By contrast, SBI slots limit maneuvering visibility at the rear of the slot, creating a hazard for drivers on foot.
- Only use designated parking areas, which often have lighting, security cameras, fencing, controlled access, and other drivers that make them safer and more secure than undesignated areas.

Resources

[TIRES Trucking Safety Program Development Tool](#)

Washington State Dept. of Labor & Industries

FATALITY NARRATIVE



This narrative was developed to alert employers and workers of a tragic incident 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.

Developed by the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), Washington State Dept. of Labor & Industries. The FACE Program is supported in part by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH grant# 5U60OH008487). For more information visit www.lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-research/ongoing-projects/work-related-fatalities-face.