

# Driver Caught Between Trucks at Warehouse Loading Dock

## INCIDENT FACTS

**REPORT #:** 71-221-2022s

**REPORT DATE:** May 9, 2022

**INCIDENT DATE:** February 24, 2022

**WORKER:** 49 years old

**INDUSTRY:** General freight trucking

**OCCUPATION:** Semi-truck driver

**SCENE:** Warehouse loading dock

**EVENT TYPE:** Struck by – Caught between



# ***INJURY NARRATIVE***



A 49-year-old truck driver was hospitalized after he was caught between a trailer and his truck cab at a warehouse loading dock. The driver was an owner operator with 27 years of driving experience. He was contracted by the warehouse to haul freight with his own truck.

# *INJURY NARRATIVE*



Trucks were backed into and parked at the warehouse loading dock bays. The driver's truck, which was pulling a reefer container trailer, was parked at one of the bays. A truck with a 53-foot dry van trailer was parked on his left side. A three-foot space separated the trucks. The dry van truck driver worked for an Illinois-based business. The drivers did not communicate with each other at the site.

# ***INJURY NARRATIVE***



At 1:30 pm, the driver was walking between the trucks from the loading dock to his cab. The driver of the dry van truck began to pull away from the dock. He did not see the driver walking even though he was wearing a high visibility vest.

# ***INJURY NARRATIVE***



The dry van turned left before it was fully out of the parking slot. The forward position of its trailer's tandem axles caused the last ten feet of the trailer to swing rightward into the space between the trucks where the driver was walking. The swinging trailer struck and pinched the driver against the left side of his truck cab, causing him to go into shock, faint, and fall down. Another driver saw him on the ground and got the dry van driver to stop. First responders transported the injured driver to the hospital. He was released three days later with severe bruises.

Investigators found:

- 1) The incident could have been avoided had the dry van truck pulled fully out of its parking slot before turning.
- 2) Had the trailer's tandem axles been in the rear position, it would not have swung into the space between the trucks where the injured driver was walking.
- 3) The contract between the owner operator and warehouse business placed the responsibility of safe vehicle operation solely on the operator.
- 4) The warehouse did not provide any safety training to truck drivers and only verified that they met federal motor carrier requirements.

# INJURY NARRATIVE



**Photo 1.** The driver was caught between the dry van trailer on the left and his truck cab on the right. Yellow X shows where he was found on the ground unconscious.

# INJURY NARRATIVE



**Photo 2.** View looking toward rear of passenger side of dry van trailer and front of driver's truck where incident occurred.



# INJURY NARRATIVE



**Photo 3.** Space between trucks similar to where the driver was walking when he was struck by the dry van trailer.

## Requirements

Employers must:

- Maintain conditions within the workplace that will not endanger the health, safety or welfare of employees. [WAC 296-800-11005](#)

## Recommendations

- Consider equipping trucks with commercially available turn assist systems that alert drivers when pedestrians are detected inside blind spots beside the vehicle.
- Require drivers to slide trailer tandems back before docking to eliminate tail swing when leaving.
- Require drivers to check right side hood tri-pod mirror and pull fully out of the parking slot before turning truck.
- Request customers with loading docks to identify vehicle struck by - caught between hazards and ensure adequate parking and maneuvering space for trucks and safe passage for pedestrians.

## Resources

- Use the [TIRES Safety Program Development Tool](#) to design a written APP or company safety program that includes policies, job hazard solutions, personal protective equipment (PPE), and training to prevent truck struck by incidents at loading docks and parking lots.

# INJURY 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](http://www.lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-research/ongoing-projects/work-related-fatalities-face).