



Alaska FACE Facts

Occupational Injury Prevention Program
Section of Epidemiology
Division of Public Health
Department of Health and Social Services

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Ironworker Crushed by Tractor-Trailer

A 51-year-old ironworker was crushed when he went to unhook a chain between a mobile crane and a stretch deck trailer. The victim and three co-workers were assisting a tractor-trailer driver to stretch and pin the trailer. Because they were having some difficulty stretching the trailer using only dunnage (a length of wood to block the wheels) in front of the rear wheels, the end of the trailer was chained to the crane's extended outrigger to prevent the rear section from moving. After the trailer was stretched, the dunnage was repositioned for the alignment and placement of locking pins. As the tractor was moved backwards, pushing the front and rear sections together, the dunnage became lodged under the wheels. With the trailer sections pinned in place, the driver exited the cab to discuss the load and the position of the trailer with the victim. There was concern that the trailer was too close to load. The driver noticed the position of the dunnage under the wheels and called to the group of workers standing to the side of the trailer that he needed to roll the trailer back. As the driver entered the tractor cab, the victim walked between the crane and the trailer to remove the chain. The tractor-trailer rolled back, crushing the victim between the crane's outrigger and the trailer.

Co-workers went to the rear of the trailer and called to the driver to move the trailer forward. Emergency medical services were called immediately after the incident and transported the victim to a nearby medical center. The victim died later that day.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the investigation, to prevent similar occurrences, employers should:

- **Install back-up alarms on all motor vehicles and equipment where the operator's vision is restricted.**
- **Require the use of helpers whenever backing and re-positioning tractor-trailers or other trucks.**

- **Consider routinely evaluating driving, loading, and unloading practices.**
- **Ensure that workers are able to recognize and avoid hazardous situations and be able to effectively warn others of potential hazards.**

Good communication skills are essential in all job situations. These communications need to be clear and concise in order to advise or alert co-workers or other persons at the worksite to actions that could jeopardize the performance and/or efficiency of their job duties or that could cause potential injury. Suggested techniques to aid in successful communication include-

- 1) Make eye contact with the person or persons you are advising
- 2) Use the name of the person to whom you are speaking
- 3) Require a response before taking action

**For more information or
a copy of this FACE report, contact the
Occupational Injury Prevention Office
(907) 269-8000**

or visit our website

<http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/programs/injury>

