

Fatality Investigation Report

Truck driver crushed between semi-trailer and loading dock

On February 8, 2010, a 62-year old truck driver was crushed and killed between a 53-foot semi-trailer and loading dock. After the delivery, he realized a tie-down strap was inside the warehouse. He pulled the truck a short distance away from the loading dock and returned to get the strap. Standing between the semi-trailer and loading dock, he banged on the roll-up door. The receiving company employee opened it, handed him the strap, noticed the semi-trailer moving, and yelled a warning, but the driver was pinned.

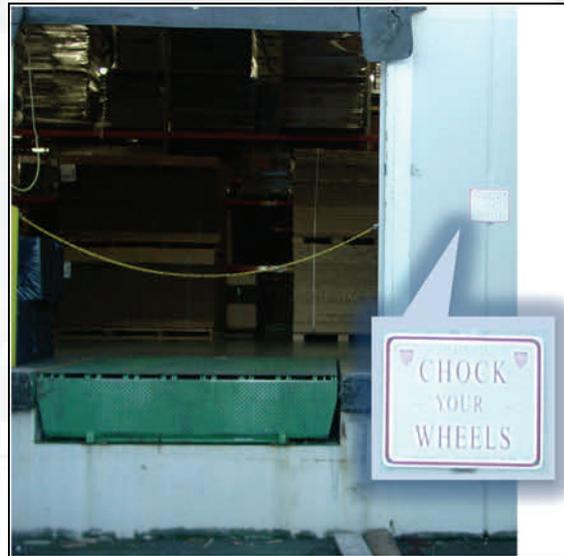
The truck was pulled forward off of the victim by the warehouse employee. The ramp had a 2 degree slope. The wheels of the trailer were not chocked, and the warehouse employee reported that the victim left the truck running and in neutral with none of the brakes set. However, the Fire Department reported that “a trailer brake” was set, but not the tractor parking brake. The Fire Department also moved the truck, chocking the wheels to establish a safe work area.

No mechanical problems were found on the tractor or trailer during the post incident inspection. The brake systems were working properly. Multiple factors may have allowed the truck/trailer movement. Based on interviews with eyewitnesses and with trucking experts, it is likely that the parking brakes were not set, allowing the truck and trailer to move and crush the victim. The slider axle of the trailer was also unlocked, which could have allowed the trailer to move on the rail over the axle as the truck rolled backwards. He died of crushing abdominal and pelvic injuries.

*Read the full investigation report [here](#).
More transportation fatality investigation reports can be downloaded [here](#).*

What can employees do?

- Fully engage tractor and trailer parking brakes before leaving the cab.
- Use wheel chocks to secure trailers and tractors against inadvertent movement, especially when parked on a slope.
- Confirm that the sliding axle assembly is locked prior to working in or around a trailer.
- Do not work or stand in pinch points where vehicles could move or roll.



The dock involved in the incident where the driver was crushed (with “Kelly” dock plate). The white sign with red letters at right (shown enlarged) reads “chock your wheels.”

What can employers do?

- Ensure that workers are trained to operate the controls of rental equipment prior to use, especially key components such as locking mechanisms and brakes.
- Periodically monitor worker performance to ensure appropriate and adequate safe operating procedures are being used.
- While current options for automatic axle locking and braking mechanisms are limited, seek out built in protective features, such as automatic locks and brakes, when renting or purchasing equipment.

Work-related Transportation Fatalities in Oregon: A Snap Shot

Between the years 2006 and 2010, the OR-FACE Program 316 recorded deaths. Almost a third (27.2%) of all of the recorded deaths were caused by transportation-related event (excluding aircraft, watercraft, and mobile machinery). Of those 316 deaths, 24% (77) were transportation occupation deaths and 16% (51) deaths occurred in the transportation industry (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. All OR-FACE cases 2006-10 by industry, occupation, and event

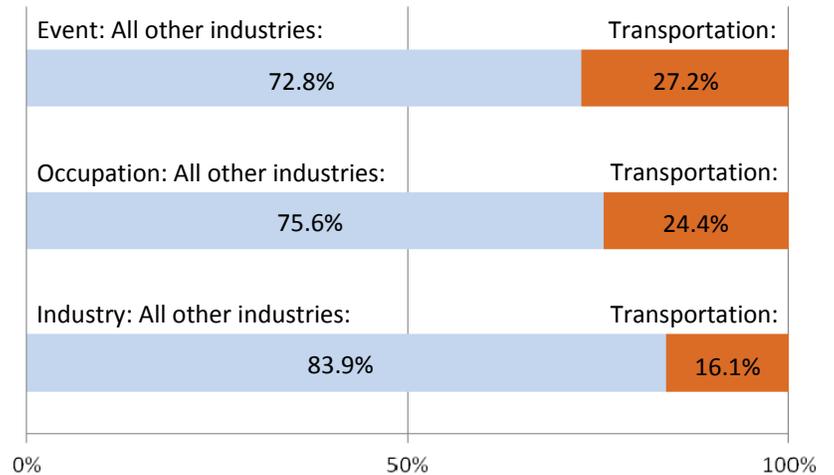
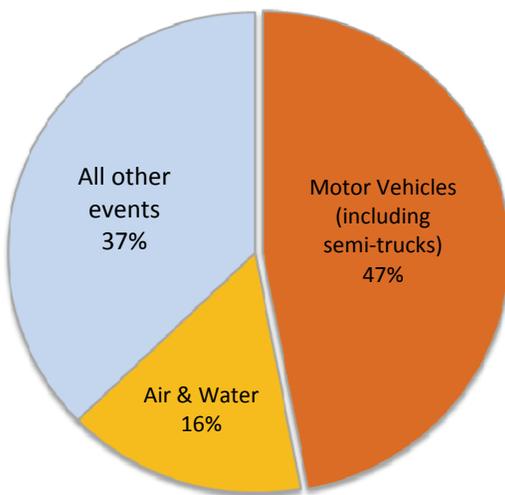


Figure 2. OR-FACE Transportation Industry Fatality Events



Of the 51 transportation industry deaths, all of the victims were men except one, and the average age of the victims were 52. Almost half of these deaths were as a result of a motor vehicle (see Figure 2). All other events include deaths due to contact, exposure, violence, fall, and fire or explosion. Furthermore, more than a quarter (25.49%) of the 51 incidents occurred on a Wednesday, and 12% of the fatalities occurred in Lane County and 10% in Multnomah County.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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