



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION

MSU DAWG TRACKS

FAIL #1:

Issued by: Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation Program

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A 64-year-old truck driver and equipment operator working for a gravel-hauling and equipment-moving company drove his employer's truck with an attached flatbed trailer to a jobsite. His task was to load a backhoe and transport it to another site. Although no one witnessed the incident, a backup warning alarm was sounding when first responders arrived, suggesting the driver was operating the backhoe in reverse. It's possible the driver had started moving the backhoe up the trailer's two metal ramps, then backed up to better position its wheels. As he was doing this, the wet, muddy tires may have slipped on the ramps, resulting in a rear wheel going off a ramp and causing the backhoe to roll over onto its side. The driver either attempted to jump from the operator's seat or was thrown from it. He was crushed under the backhoe's rollover protective structure and died. The backhoe had a seat belt that, if used, would have kept the driver in the seat and within the protective structure as the equipment rolled.



“Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.”
-Eleanor Roosevelt

How to prevent similar trailer accidents:

- ✓ Ensure the trailer is properly secured to the truck.
- ✓ Park truck and trailer on a flat area.
- ✓ Chock the tires of the trailer and set parking brake on tow vehicle.
- ✓ If heavy equipment may cause the back wheels of tow truck to be temporarily lifted during loading/unloading, block up the back of the trailer to help support that load.
- ✓ Ensure ramps are secured to the trailer.
- ✓ Try to avoid loading/unloading in the rain; wet conditions only increase the risk of sliding. Remove any mud or debris from the equipment, ramps, and trailer that also can make for slick conditions.
- ✓ Wear the seatbelt while loading & unloading equipment.
- ✓ Use a spotter to provide directions and help watch for hazards that may occur.
- ✓ Load and unload carefully and slowly.

FAIL #2:

Watch this 1-minute video and think about what could have been done differently...



<https://youtu.be/3c4Z8MNmlA8>

Sources:

* <https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/22693-face-report-truck-driver-equipment-operator-crushed-while-loading-backhoe-onto-trailer>

* School of Hard Knocks - been there, almost did that 😊

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