

Fatality Narrative

Workers Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes*

Industry: Construction
Occupation: Construction occupations
Task: Driving to job sites
Type of Incident: Motor vehicle crashes

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Three Separate Fatality Incidents

- On September 18, 2004, a 21-year-old gutter installer was killed when the 18-foot box van he was driving left the interstate highway and crashed into a concrete pillar of a highway overpass.
- On January 19, 2005, a 31-year-old electrician was killed when the box van he was driving was struck head-on by a vehicle that crossed over into his lane of travel.
- On January 31, 2005, a 20-year-old construction worker was killed while traveling as a passenger in a flatbed truck driven by a foreman that rear-ended a vehicle and then left the highway and struck a fence.

**Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of work-related deaths in the United States
Employers and employees are in a strategic position to promote road safety on the job**

Requirements/Recommendations

(! Indicates items required by law)

- Conduct driver's license background checks on prospective employee drivers before they are hired and perform periodic checks after hiring.
- ! Train drivers in safe driving practices and provide follow-up reinforcement.
- Provide reminders to drivers on the hazards of driving after dark and in winter conditions.
- ! Enforce mandatory seat belt use.
- Establish schedules that allow drivers to obey speed limits and limit their hours of service according to regulations. Do not permit workers to exceed posted speed limits.
- Do not permit workers to drive while fatigued. Monitor schedules so drivers are well rested before they travel on the road.
- Do not require workers to conduct business on a cell phone while driving. Implement a policy of pulling off the road before making or receiving a cell phone call.
- ! Maintain vehicles in safe operating condition and remove from service any vehicles with mechanical defects. Establish written policies for proper maintenance of vehicles.
- ! Ensure that workers are licensed and trained properly to operate the vehicle they are assigned.

State Wide Statistics: The 2004 incident was the 72nd out of 92 work-related fatalities in Washington State during the year, and was the 13th out of 17 construction-related fatalities for 2004. The incidents in 2005 were the 2nd and 6th out of 71 work-related fatalities in Washington State to date, and were the first 2 out of 7 construction-related fatalities for the year to date.

This bulletin was developed at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State. We encourage you to consider the above information as you make safety decisions for or recommendations to your company or constituency. The information in this notice 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.

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