



Driver Injured by Side Mirror Impact with Oncoming Truck

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BACKGROUND

It was a clear winter morning in the Southeastern US. A logging company pickup truck was traveling to the job site around dawn.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The logging company pickup truck's side mirror was struck by the extended mirror of an oncoming dual rear-wheel truck that crossed the center line of the road.

ACCIDENT

The pickup truck was traveling westbound on a state highway when it encountered heavy oncoming traffic. The driver was traveling at the posted speed limit of 55 mph and was wearing his seatbelt. A dark-colored "dually" truck crossed the center line, and the extended side mirror of the truck struck the side mirror of the logging company pickup truck.

INJURY

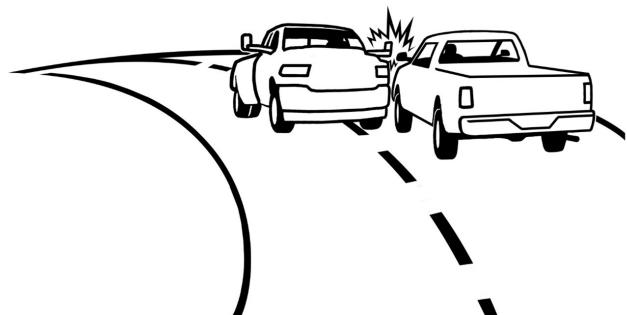
The collision broke the driver's side mirror on the pickup truck. Flying debris from the damaged mirror also shattered the driver's side window. The pickup driver was showered with broken glass, and a piece of the broken mirror entered the cab, striking the driver in the head. The driver activated his emergency flashers and called his boss to report the accident. The boss was traveling approximately 300 feet in front of the pickup and instructed the driver to safely pull off the road and meet him to assess the damage and injuries. They stopped approximately one-half mile from the accident scene. The boss brushed the broken glass off the driver and did not notice any visible cuts, bruises, bumps, bleeding, etc. The driver was emotionally shaken from the incident and claimed that his neck and left hip were sore. The driver informed his boss that he was fine and declined further medical evaluation. He worked his entire shift the day of the accident and informed his boss that he would see him the next morning.

INJURY (continued)

Instead of reporting to work the following day, the employee transported himself to the Emergency Room, citing pain in his head and hip. The employee was provided an "Out of Work" note for two days and prescribed pain medication and a muscle relaxer. He was diagnosed with a possible concussion and was encouraged to seek additional treatment from his Primary Care Physician. Two days later, the driver returned to the Emergency Room complaining of a closed head injury, left ear pain, and left hip pain.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION

- Always maintain a proper and safe distance from the center line on divided highways.
- Consider installing dash cameras in company-owned vehicles to protect employees and other business assets.
- Encourage employees to seek medical attention after accidents even if they resist and consider seeking legal counsel on ways to protect yourself and your company from injured employees who refuse medical treatment after an accident.



This Safety Alert analyzes an injury in accordance with the chain of events represented by the five dominoes above. Pioneer industry safety experts H.W. Heinrich and Alfred Lateiner developed this accident analysis system to provide a graphic sense of how injuries can be avoided. Their methodology has been accepted by safety professionals worldwide.

Safety Meeting Report

Date:

Company:

Names of Employees Attending:

Topic(s) Discussed:

Comments / Recommendations:

Meeting Conducted by: