



Always Check Brakes Prior to Trip

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SAFETY ALERT • APRIL 2023

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BACKGROUND

It was a cloudy, late fall day in the Appalachians. A truck driver was delivering pulpwood into a mill. The driver was going downhill, on an 8% grade, toward the woodyard.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The truck driver was 55 years old and the owner/operator of the truck. He had been working for 36 years in trucking, was fully trained, had no record of disabilities or accidents, and used his PPE regularly.

UNSAFE ACT OR CONDITION

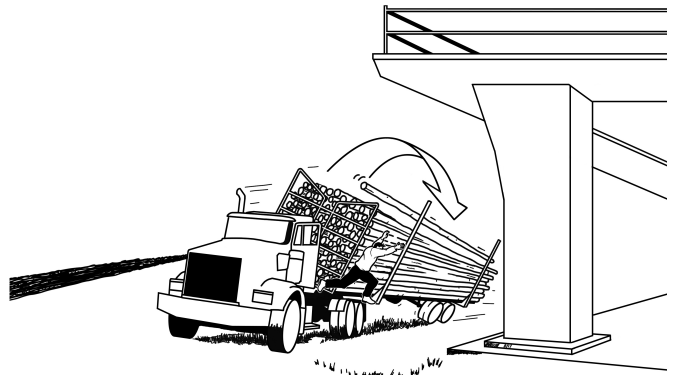
Prior to the driver leaving the job he neglected to adjust or check the brakes on the tractor or trailer.

ACCIDENT

The driver was delivering pulpwood into the mill and had just weighed in at the scale house. He was driving downhill, on an 8% grade, toward the woodyard for unloading. As he approached a curve, he discovered the brakes weren't working, and he couldn't negotiate a turn. He kept driving straight into the old part of the mill, which was no longer in use. The driver jumped out of the cab just before the truck came to rest, leaning at a 45-degree angle against a metal tower. The tower stopped the load from tipping over completely.

INJURY

The driver sustained a sprained knee from exiting the truck cab while it was moving. He wasn't hospitalized but treated with ice for swelling.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION

Always do a walk around of the truck and visually check the load. Check all brake adjustments for the proper settings before beginning the trip. Make sure to pull over and check the brakes prior to starting into any steep, downhill grades. The driver should remain alert and vigilant whenever driving roads that present unique hazards. Always use a seatbelt.



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

Topic(s) Discussed:

Comments / Recommendations:

Date:

Company:

Names of Employees Attending:

Meeting Conducted by:

Please follow equipment manufacturers' recommendations for safe operation and maintenance procedures.

signature