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SAFETY ALERT

07-S-14

PICKUP TRUCK COLLIDES WITH WOODS ROAD GATE

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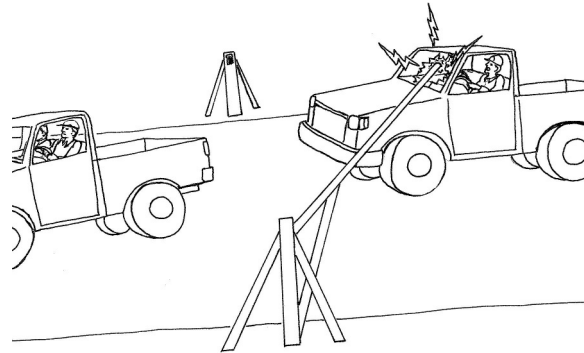
www.forestresources.org/members/serpub/07-S-14.html

BACKGROUND: On a dry, dark evening in the South, two pickup trucks were being driven on a road owned and maintained by an industrial forest landowner.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: The two pickup trucks were being driven by teenagers, one with a teenaged passenger. The teenagers were members of the industrial forest landowner's hunting club. All three teenagers were wearing seatbelts.

UNSAFE ACT OR CONDITION: The rear vehicle's driver was following the other vehicle too closely at night and was not paying attention to the situation. A gate on the industrial forestland road was partially open. The gate was rusty and did not have reflective, hi-visibility tape on either side.

ACCIDENT: As the first truck approached the gate, the driver noticed the gate was partially open and swerved to miss the gate. The second vehicle was following too closely and did not notice the partially opened gate. The gate arm entered the second truck through the windshield, grazed the passenger in the left cheek, and then exited the truck through the passenger window. The truck was able to back off the gate but had to be towed away from the scene. The windshield and passenger side window had to be replaced.



INJURY: Fortunately, the passenger sustained only a minor facial injury.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION: There should be a company policy for ensuring gates will be held open while operations are in the area. Gates should be retrofitted with a mechanism to keep the gates open during operations, and they should have reflective tape on them.

Drivers on woods roads should only follow each other at safe distances and should be aware of the many obstacles common in such environments.

Reviewed by:

Jason Cutshall

Southcentral Region Manager

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