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SAFETY ALERT

08-S-14

LOG TRUCK ROLLOVER FATALITY

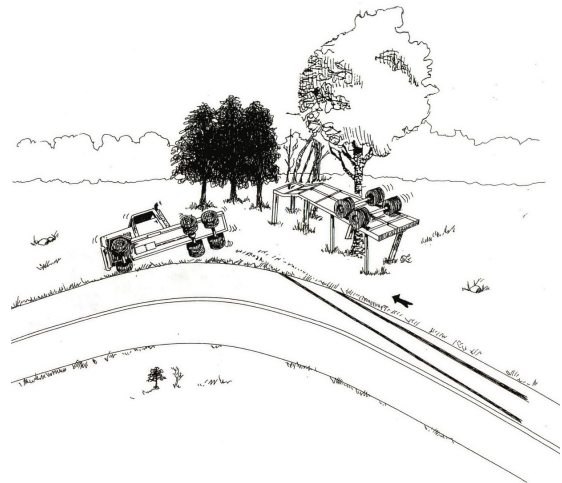
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www.forestresources.org/members/serpub/08-s-14.html

BACKGROUND: On a warm, sunny, fall afternoon, a raw material haul truck owner/operator was returning from delivering a load of logs to a sawmill when his tractor-trailer left the highway and struck a tree.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: The 46-year-old owner/operator had 25 years of combined experience as a company driver and owner/operator. He hauled various raw materials, including logs, lumber, and sawdust on mostly local daily runs, five days a week and three to four loads per day. He did not have a regular sleeping routine. On this day, he began hauling a load of sawdust at 2 AM. Later that morning he switched the tractor to the logging trailer and at 10 AM went home and napped until 12 Noon.

UNSAFE ACTS: Late that afternoon, the owner/operator had completed delivery of his third load of logs (fourth load of the day). He was traveling on a two-lane state highway that did not have paved shoulders. The speed limit was 55 mph and the pavement was dry. A witness following the truck in her car stated that she was driving between 55-60 mph and could not keep up with the tractor-trailer. As the tractor-trailer rounded a slight uphill left-hand curve in the road, the driver applied the brakes.



ACCIDENT: The tractor-trailer driver lost control when the back tires of the empty trailer went off the roadway to the right and into the ditch. The tractor-trailer jackknifed, then struck a tree. The cab rolled over onto its right side with the trailer turning upside-down. The driver left skid marks approximately 400 feet long.

INJURY: The driver was killed, due to multiple blunt force injuries. When EMS arrived, they found that the driver had not been wearing his seatbelt, and he was partially ejected from the cab. Furthermore, toxicology results detected methamphetamine and doxylamine in the driver's body. The tractor was totaled, and the trailer frame was broken on the right side.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION: All truck drivers should wear seatbelts and should comply with posted speed limits. Slow down when approaching curves in the road.

Owner/operators must comply with mandated participation in a consortium that provides the central coordination of drug screening programs and other services within Federal Motor Carrier Administration guidelines and Department of Transportation regulations.

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