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SAFETY ALERT

08-S-3

DRIVER BURNED CHECKING FUEL LEVEL WITH CIGARETTE LIGHTER

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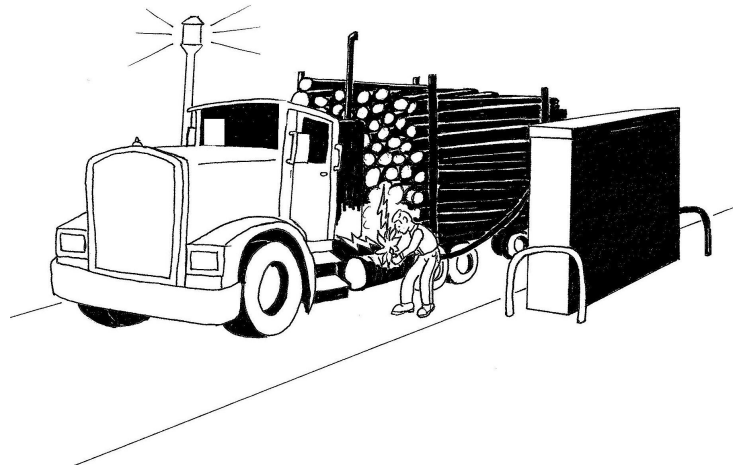
www.forestresources.org/members/serpub/08-S-3.html

BACKGROUND: On a dark fall evening in the South, a truck driver was fueling up his truck at the company's truck staging area. The staging area was equipped with a night light, but the truck's fuel tank was located on the opposite side from the light source. The truck driver was pumping diesel fuel from a 1,000-gallon tank.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: The 55-year-old truck driver had 20 years of experience as a truck driver and had been employed with the logging firm for ten years. The driver was a non-smoker but had got in the habit of checking his truck's fuel level with a cigarette lighter. The driver's employer and co-workers were unaware of this practice.

UNSAFE ACT OR CONDITION:

Since the side of the truck where the fuel tank was located was dark, the truck driver began checking the tank's fuel level with his cigarette lighter half-way through fueling. The 1,000-gallon fuel tank was empty, and the truck driver was unknowingly pumping diesel fuel vapors into the tank instead of liquid.



ACCIDENT: The diesel fuel vapors ignited when the truck driver lit the cigarette lighter over the fuel tank.

INJURY: The flame burned the truck driver's eyebrows off, and he sustained minor burns on his forehead. The truck driver did not miss any work due to the accident.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION: Never use a lighter, strike matches, or smoke near flammable material. Management should ensure that adequate, safe lighting is available in all workspaces.

Reviewed by:

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Southcentral Region Manager

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