



# IT REALLY HAPPENED

Winter 2017

True Stories, Real Truck Drivers, Serious Injuries

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## Slip on Ice Injures Driver's Back, Ends Career

A 68-year-old truck driver sustained a permanently disabling lower-back injury when he slipped on ice during a routine post-trip vehicle inspection.

On the day of the incident, the driver had just returned to his company's home terminal from a delivery to a customer in a nearby state. The driver, a 45-year trucking veteran, still had to perform a post-trip DOT inspection before ending his shift. Freezing midday winter temperatures formed small ice spots on the terminal yard's gravel



surface. The driver climbed down from the cab and walked to the rear of his trailer, checking equipment along the way.

Coming back up on the passenger's side, he slipped on ice near the tractor's fifth wheel deck area. Attempting to break his fall, he grasped the cab's right rear corner vertical grab handle, which jerked his body and worsened his injury. The injury ended the driver's career, and exceeded \$235,000 in direct costs.

## TIPS TO LIVE BY Management

- Keep terminal yard and dock area surfaces well lit, even, and free of ice, snow, rubbish, potholes, liquid spills, and other debris.
- Train drivers to identify and report hazardous work and walk surface conditions.

## Drivers

- When possible, keep one hand on the side of the vehicle for support while walking around the vehicle.
- Wear suitable and serviceable anti-slip footwear.
- Keep tractor and trailer steps, decks, and grab handles clean and serviceable.

## All Employees

- Look twice for slippery, uneven, or crumbling walk and work surfaces around vehicles and other work areas.
- During extreme weather, be extra cautious in assessing hazards in your work area.



Washington State Department of Labor & Industries

The Trucking Injury Reduction Emphasis (TIRES) project developed this narrative to alert trucking industry employers and employees of a serious injury of a worker in Washington State. The narrative is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the injury.

TIRES is a project of the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) program at the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries. The project is supported in part by a grant from the CDC/National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH grant# U60 OH008487). For more information and free training resources, contact the SHARP program at: 1-888-667-4277, or visit:

# KeepTruckingSafe.org

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