

# IT REALLY HAPPENED

True Stories  
Real Truck Drivers  
Serious Injuries



## Hold On! Trailer Ladders are Safety Matters

A 52-year-old general freight truck driver injured his shoulder and neck after falling off a ladder.

It happened when the driver was chaining and tarping a load on his flatbed trailer.

He had a rigid ladder set up alongside his trailer for accessing the five-foot high deck.

In a rush, the driver launched up the ladder, barely holding on to its side rails. His hand suddenly slipped. He lost balance and fell 3 feet to the ground below.

Landing hard on his left side, the driver felt instant pain in his shoulder and neck.

Medical tests showed that the impact of the short fall damaged the driver's shoulder socket, which caused weakness and limited motion in his arm. The driver now needs shoulder surgery. Recovery will keep him off the job for over a year.

[Get the NIOSH Ladder Safety App](#)



*NIOSH's Ladder Safety App is a free mobile device application made to improve workplace ladder safety.*

### TIPS TO LIVE BY

#### Management

- Make sure drivers are trained to set-up, climb, and work with trailer ladders in a safe, focused manner.
- Make sure to provide drivers with anti-slip protective work gloves.

#### Drivers

- Don't rush, stay focused when climbing a trailer ladder.
- Set and angle ladder on firm, even ground, making sure it extends at least 3-feet above the top landing.
- Never carry a load or make movements that can make you lose balance.
- Always wear protective work gloves, and maintain a stable 3-point (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand) contact on the ladder.
- Keep your body near the middle of the step and face the ladder while climbing.
- Never lean over or stand on top step of the ladder.

#### All Employees

- Actively look for hazards and share injury prevention ideas with management.



Washington State Department of  
Labor & Industries

TIRES is a project of the Safety & Health Assessment & Research for Prevention (SHARP) program of the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries. TIRES is supported in part by CDC/NIOSH grant# U60 OH008487. For more information and free training resources visit

[KeepTruckingSafe.org](http://KeepTruckingSafe.org)