



## Tarpping related fall injuries to drivers

Covering a load to protect it during transit can be dangerous. Falling off the load or trailer is no small matter. Following are summaries of fall injuries sustained while covering and uncovering loads with tarps. These examples are just a few of the many tarping related fall injuries experienced every year by Washington state truck drivers. Of the injuries summarized, the shortest amount of time lost from work was two months. Companies and drivers can't afford these types of injuries.

- A 49-year-old driver on his truck tarping a load fell off when the wind blew the tarp. He landed on his right shoulder, spraining it and developing serious complications. Workers' compensation costs were \$170,000, including 227 weeks of time-loss.
- A 40-year-old driver tarping a load of wood chips fell from the catwalk of a trailer and landed on his left outstretched arm, breaking his wrist. Workers' compensation costs were \$9,000, including 8 weeks of time-loss.
- A 45-year-old driver on his truck tarping a load of steel tubing fell to the pavement when the heel of his boot caught on a load strap. He sprained his neck, shoulder, and back. Workers' compensation costs were \$28,000, including 40 weeks of time-loss.
- A 31-year-old driver taking a cord off of a tarp on top of a load of plywood slipped and fell 10 feet to the ground, spraining and fracturing his right ankle. Workers' compensation costs were \$18,000, including 12 weeks of time-loss.

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

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Driver using a tarping station

### TIPS TO LIVE BY

#### Employers

- Implement a fall prevention plan.
- Require use of tarping stations when available.
- Consider updating to curtain side vans.
- Equip dump trucks with auto tarping systems.
- Provide ladders for accessing the load. Use padding to prevent metal on metal wear to ladders during transport.
- Encourage drivers to share techniques or tricks.

#### Drivers

- Use tarping stations when provided.
- Use a forklift to get tarps on top of load, but don't ride the forks along with the tarp.
- Roll tarps out forward rather than pulling backwards, so edges and voids are visible.
- Report holes or wear to trailer deck.