

MNM Fatal 2013-09

- Powered Haulage Accident
- June 13, 2013 (California)
- Crushed Stone Mine
- Lead Mechanic
- 49 years old
- 30 years of experience

Overview

The victim was killed when the haul truck he was driving went out of control, struck a berm, and was propelled into the air. The haul truck came to a stop with the bed overturned and the cab upright. He was ejected from the haul truck.

Prior to the accident, the haul truck had been located on a steep, temporary ramp leading up to an area that was being cleared for quarry expansion. A truck driver had backed the haul truck up the ramp to get a load of tree stumps and debris. He noticed an oil leak at one of the wheels and decided to drive the haul truck down the ramp to park it for repairs. As the driver was traveling down the ramp, the parking brake locked up and the haul truck would not move. The victim was called to help remove the truck from the ramp. Due to a series of events, the victim was unable to maintain control of the haul truck as it descended the steep ramp. The haul truck was freewheeling with no transmission retarder braking and he had little time, due to the steep grade, to respond.

The accident occurred because management failed to ensure that the braking systems on the haul truck were maintained in a functional condition, causing the haul truck to stop on the ramp. Management also failed to ensure that the haul truck could be safely towed for repairs. The victim failed to maintain control of the truck he was operating and failed to wear the provided seat belt, contributing to the severity of his injuries.



Root Causes

Root Cause: Management failed to ensure that routine maintenance was performed on the braking systems on the haul truck.

Corrective Action: Management established policies and procedures to ensure that maintenance is performed on haul trucks to keep the equipment in functional condition.

Root Cause: The victim did not maintain control of the haul truck he was operating.

Corrective Action: Management developed procedures to be followed when a haul truck signals a brake warning to the operator of the haul truck. All supervisors, mobile equipment operators, and mechanics have been trained regarding what procedures to follow when a brake warning occurs on a haul truck.

Root Cause: Management policies, procedures, and controls did not ensure the victim wore his seat belt when operating the haul truck.

Corrective Action: All truck drivers received additional training regarding the required use of seat belts when operating a haul truck. Management will monitor truck drivers to ensure seat belts are worn.

Best Practices

- Always wear a seat belt when operating self-propelled mobile equipment.
- Do not operate mobile equipment with reported brake problems. Use other means to move the mobile equipment to a safe area for inspection and repair.
- Ensure that mobile equipment operators are task trained adequately in all phases of mobile equipment operation, including the mobile equipment's capabilities, operating ranges, load-limits and safety features, before operating mobile equipment.
- Maintain equipment steering and braking systems in good repair and adjustment. Always follow the manufacturer's service and maintenance schedules.
- Never rely on engine brakes and transmission retarders as substitutes for keeping brakes properly maintained.
- Conduct adequate pre-operational checks to ensure the service brakes will stop and hold the mobile equipment prior to operating.
- Operators of self-propelled mobile equipment shall maintain control of the equipment while it is in motion.
- Operating speeds shall be consistent with conditions of roadways, tracks, grades, clearance, visibility, curves, and traffic.
- Do not attempt to exit or jump from moving mobile equipment.