

Worker Struck by Sliding Loader

Incident Date: February 7, 2020 / Location: Vermilion River County, AB / Industry: Trucking



AI Teaching Illustration. Shows the downhill crush zone before impact. Vehicle positions, road slope and distances are schematic; no tow connection is shown.

What Happened

A truck driver was hauling a rock-crusher conveyor out of a gravel pit when the truck could climb no farther up an icy hill. A loader moved ahead to help tow it. The driver got out and stood at the truck's front tow pin to prepare the connection.

Although the loader operator applied the brakes, the loader slid about 11 metres downhill. It struck the driver, briefly pinning the worker against the truck. The impact and icy conditions also sent the truck and conveyor sliding backward into a ditch. Coworkers provided first aid, but the driver died at the scene.

Why This Became Fatal

Applied brakes could not prevent the loader from sliding on ice. The driver was in the downhill travel path, between two heavy vehicles, while preparing the tow. The truck also slid despite its air brakes being applied. The incident shows why loss of traction must trigger a reassessment before recovery.

NEVER FORGET.

LET THEIR STORY PREVENT RECURRENCE.

What Safe Looks Like

If the equipment cannot hold its position, the recovery plan must change.



1 Stop and Reassess

Suspend movement when traction or vehicle stability is uncertain.

2 Keep People Clear

Exclude workers from slide paths and gaps between vehicles.

3 Plan the Recovery

Confirm traction, restraint, rated connections and communication before approach.

AI Teaching Illustration. Conceptual stop-and-plan scene, not a recovery setup or the incident site. **LSR links:** Line of Fire; Driving.

Investigation Outcome

The file was sent to **Alberta Justice** on January 14, 2021. After reviewing it, Justice advised OHS on **June 11, 2021 that charges were not recommended**. The investigation was completed on March 18, 2022. The report does not identify a conviction or fine arising from this incident.

Talk It Through with Your Crew

- 1 Where could our vehicles slide even with their brakes applied?
- 2 Could anyone be trapped between machines during our towing or recovery tasks?
- 3 Who decides whether traction, restraints and the recovery method are adequate?
- 4 Would you stop or refuse a hookup if the vehicles could not be kept stationary?

SAFETY COMES FIRST.

Your Right to Refuse – Alberta. You may refuse work you reasonably believe presents an undue hazard: a serious and immediate threat. Promptly report the refusal and reasons to your employer or supervisor. They must investigate. Contact Alberta OHS if unresolved. Take reasonable care not to endanger others. You are protected from reprisal.

Sources: [Alberta OHS investigation F-OHS-196224](#), pp. 2-9; summary completed March 18, 2022. [Alberta refusal guidance](#). Prepared October 19, 2026. LSR links are learning associations, not findings of a breach.

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