

# **FATAL ALERT**

On December 9, 2012, an employee working for a timber operation was “run over” by tractor/trailer vehicle used in timber operations. At the time of the accident, the employee was in the process of applying tire chains to the passenger side rear dual wheels of the trailer. During this time, the tractor remained running and the trailer was loaded with approximately 70,000 to 80,000 pounds of timber. It is unknown if the brakes were actually set by the employee or by the individuals that discovered the accident, although the responding deputy stated that the person who discovered the accident stated that he had entered the cab and set the brake., There were no wheel chocks found at the scene.

As there were no witnesses to the accident, it was determined by the condition of the scene that the employee had exited the tractor and was attempting to add tire chains onto the passenger side rear dual wheels of the trailer, the tractor and trailer began rolling down the logging road and ran over the employee.

## **Significant Factors**

- The tractor/trailer had been stopped on a slight decline.
- The road that the tractor/trailer was stopped on was snow/ice covered at the time of the accident.
- The tractor/trailer was stopped just before a curve in the road instead of pulling forward into the turnout area.
- The trailer had a load of 70,000 to 80,000 pounds of timber loaded on it.
- The tractor and trailer had a history of problems with the brake system.
- There were no other safety measures being utilized.
- Complacency. Owner stated that the employee was 80 years old and had been doing this type of work since he was 12 years old.

## **Recommendations**

- Brief all future employees on the safety aspects of all areas of the job.
- Ensure training is provided, performed and documented.
- Ensure that safety meetings are being conducted prior to the start of a project to discuss the work to be performed, identifying the potential safety hazards and implementing safe work procedures to control hazards.
- Ensure maintenance and repairs are being completed by a qualified person utilizing acceptable maintenance practices utilizing replacement materials meeting Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) specifications or equivalent.