

HAZARD ALERT

DUMP TRUCK TAILGATE CAUSES CRUSHING INJURIES

An experienced dump truck operator was seriously injured when he was hit by the truck's tailgate and crushed by the load. He was removing frozen material from the raised box when the tailgate opened, and the contents of the box became loose and struck him. He was found crushed and incoherent near the rear wheels.

WorkSafeNB advises operators to stay clear of tailgates and be aware of proper procedures for removing material from a box. It is believed that, to save time, the operator used a sledge hammer to free the frozen material.

Employers should have a written procedure for cleaning stuck material from a box. Employers should also ensure that manufacturer's hazard signs and decals are clearly visible.

Recommended Preventive Action

- Stay in the truck cab at all times during the dumping operation.
- Ensure ground is firm and level from side to side before raising the dump box.
- Ensure all people are a safe distance from the truck while dumping a load.
- Identify overhead hazards such as electrical wires.
- Lower the dump box before moving the truck when possible.
- Lower the dump box if the box starts to tilt.
- Ensure the ground is stable and level in the driving direction, while shunting with the box in a raised position.
- If a load becomes frozen in the dump box, lower the box and secure the tailgate before trying to break the load free. Ideally, thaw the load indoors.
- Never stand between the tailgate and the box.
- Stay clear of the tailgate as it may open unexpectedly.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for using the equipment safely. If the manufacturer's instructions are not available, contact the manufacturer or get instructions online or from a professional engineer.
- Ensure workers who work on heavy equipment are adequately informed, instructed, trained and supervised.

