

# SAFETY / HAZARD ALERT

## Lowboy / Lowbed incidents lead to serious injuries to operators

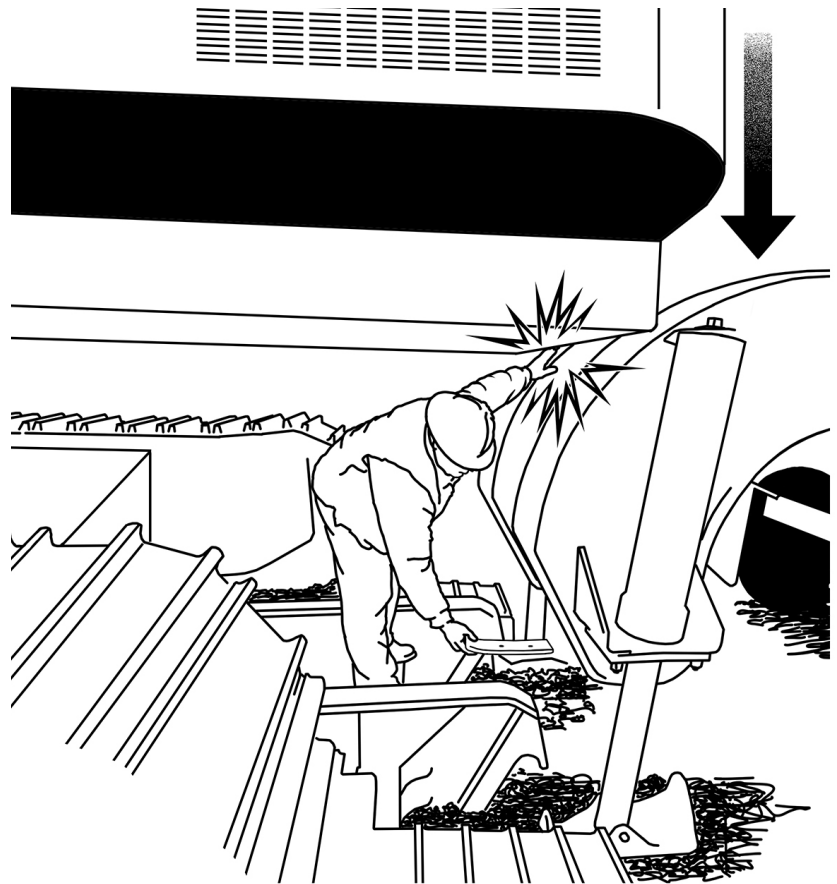
**Location:** U.S. Pacific Northwest

**Date of Incidents:** 2019

**Details of Incident 1:** A lowboy operator was coupling the lowboy gooseneck to a lowbed trailer deck after loading and chaining down a processor. During coupling, the hooks of the trailer did not fully couple over the steel pins of the gooseneck. It can be difficult to determine when this happens, as there is no good way to visually inspect the connections of the components.

After backing in the lowboy, the operator climbed under the machine counterbalance to place shims. The operator can only place shims by climbing in between the gooseneck and the trailer after the initial hookup is completed. The shims are stored on a keeper post on the rear of the gooseneck. He reached under the machine counterbalance to replace the cotter pin in the keeper post.

As the operator reached under the machine, he steadied himself with his left hand on the support frame of the gooseneck. At this point, the trailer detached from the gooseneck and fell to the ground. The operator's left middle finger and ring finger were crushed between the processor counterbalance and trailer gooseneck, partially amputating them.



## Findings & Recommended Preventative Actions:

- While the operator had prior experience, it had been over ten years since he had last worked with a lowboy. The employer assumed that because the operator had experience, he did not need training.
- Employers must adequately train employees to recognize safety and health hazards associated with the employee's specific tasks and verify that employees can safely operate new equipment and complete assigned tasks.
- Create a reference point on the trailer deck, by either painting or welding, to show when the trailer is all the way backed into the pins, ensuring proper coupling.
- Wait to position and chain down a load on the trailer until after coupling is complete. In this case, for coupling, the processor should have been positioned to the rear of the trailer deck rather than towards the front. After coupling was complete, the processor should have been repositioned forward and chained down.



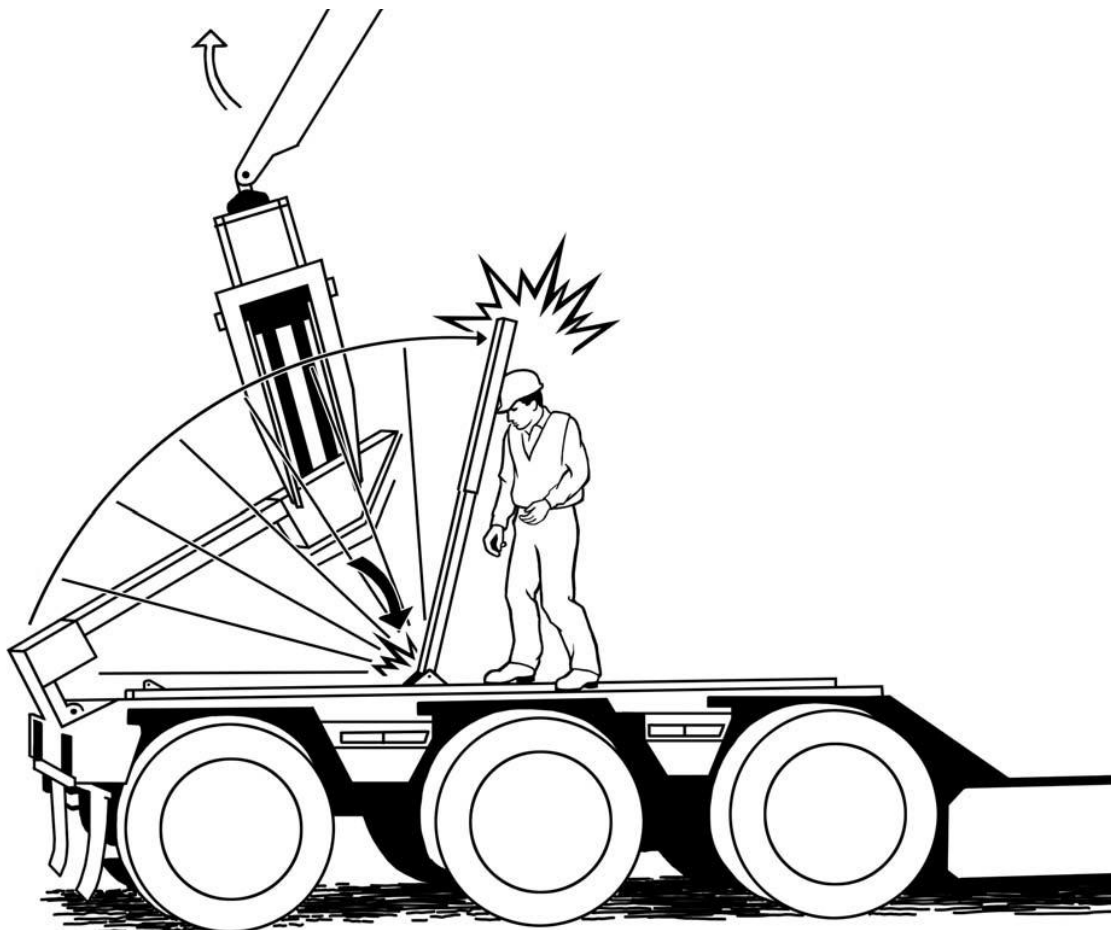
Incident scene showing the position of the operator when the trailer detached from the gooseneck.

For more information: [Visit the source web page](#)

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**Details of Incident 2 on next page**

**Details of Incident 2:** A lowboy operator and a shovel operator were positioning a boom stand on a lowboy trailer in preparation for loading a shovel. The lowboy operator was standing on the



trailer's deck near the rear tires as the shovel operator positioned the boom stand. He was leaning forward and reaching toward the support arm when the grapples slipped off the boom stand. As the boom stand fell towards the deck, it caused the support arm to strike the pin boss. The support arm flipped up and struck the lowboy operator's hardhat, causing him a serious head injury.

#### **Findings & Recommended Preventative Actions:**

- Both the lowboy and shovel operators had prior experience in moving procedures.
- Their employer had an established procedure for lifting or lowering the boom stand using a chain attached to the grapples of a shovel. Instead, the lowboy operator directed the shovel operator to use the shovel's grapples to lift the boom stand into place.
- Make sure everyone involved understands, communicates, and follows all safety procedures in place for the tasks that they will be performing.
- Employee work areas must be spaced, and employee duties organized, so the actions of one employee do not create a hazard for any other employee.

**For more information:** [Visit the source web page](#)