

Employee Fatality

Government Motorvehicle Crash



Activity: An HVAC Mechanic with 39 years experience was driving a government utility vehicle along an Interstate highway (55 mph speed limit) heading toward a two lane exit ramp (25 mph speed limit). The vehicle entered the ramp and stuck the guardrail on the left side of the ramp approximately 25 feet from the entry point of the ramp. The vehicle proceeded through the guardrail, traveled approximately 120 feet in a grassy area and crashed the front-end of the vehicle into opposite embankment of a tree lined ditch. The ditch is approximately 4 feet deep and approximately 12 wide. The front end of the vehicle was crushed trapping and killing the employee inside. Responding fire and emergency service personnel found the driver was not wearing a seatbelt at the time of the crash.

Investigation Findings:

- All crash related evidence and crash site investigation indicated the driver made no attempt to brake or change course thus suggesting that the mishap was likely caused by the driver incapacitation resulting from some sort of medical event
- Although the deceased was not wearing his seat belt at the time of the accident, the primary identified cause of death (blunt force trauma) would not have been prevented by seat belt use due to the severity of the impact

Communication Points:

- Motor vehicle-related incidents are the leading cause of work-related fatalities in the U.S. where 40% of 4,405 workplace fatalities were transportation incidents
- All persons riding in or on a GMV shall properly wear safety belts.
- Individuals shall not ride in seating positions where safety belts have not been installed, or have been removed or rendered inoperative