Laborer Pinned Against Dump Truck

Sean Merriman, 32, had been working for Caltrans for only a few months when he was killed at a road construction site in San Jose, CA.

Known as a hard worker and well-liked by his co-workers, he had spent the previous five years with a municipal public works department.

Merriman, part of a three-man crew filling potholes along Highway 101, was shoveling asphalt from a dump truck in the rain. A safety truck was parked nearby to protect workers. A tow truck traveling at full speed hit the safety truck, pushing it into Merriman and pinning him against the dump truck.

The California Highway Patrol investigated. The tow truck driver voluntarily submitted to a blood test done to see if drugs or alcohol were a factor in the fatality.

Work zone safety is everyone's responsibility. Every driver should be alert for signs of road construction and should obey all speed limits and other instructions when driving near construction zones.

Source: The Dispatch, Gilroy, California, April 5, 2006