

# REAL LIFE LESSONS

## FROM TRUCK DRIVERS INJURED AT WORK



### ***Snap, Crackle and Pop!***

Those of us old enough to remember when there was no such thing as an Internet, or texting, or Facebook quickly recall the advertisement for Rice Krispies when they used the phrase “snap, crackle and pop” in their commercials. The language was designed to signify a fresh breakfast cereal that made those sounds when you poured milk over it. It was supposed to be a good thing, but if those are the sounds that your body is making while working it may not be a good thing.

Ted used those very words to describe the noise that his knee made when he was struggling to push in the clutch and shift gears while he was driving. In his case, “snap, crackle and pop” was not a good thing.

The truck that Ted drives (drove until he recovers from his injury) is a tri-axle dump. On this particular dispatch he was hauling crushed rock in support of a public road construction project. Because the quarry and the construction project were fairly close to each other Ted had to shift gears quite a bit. He never really got a good, straight run of road when he could stay in the same gear. This frequent shifting of gears and clutching began to wear out his leg. Eventually he was clutching and his knee made a very loud pop and he immediately experienced sharp pain. It was so severe that he could no longer drive and had to pull over and call for help.

This situation complicated Ted’s physical state of health (severe knee pain) and it congested the construction site with an immobile vehicle. It also jeopardized the company’s contract with the road construction contractor. What a mess.

### **REAL LIFE LESSON**

The normal, safe, expected operation of a truck is dependent on driver behavior and on the condition and maintenance of the truck. Of those two things, maintaining a truck is easier. But, if the driver does not report mechanical problems, or if the company does not respond promptly and appropriately, then “issues” will result.

In this situation, the clutch had been in need of repair for some time, and Ted (the driver) failed to report that he had been experiencing difficulty with his clutch on his DVIR, until after he was injured. If management is not aware of issues, they can’t take action to correct them. Learn from Ted’s mistake and commit to reporting problems (and potential problems) with your equipment. Ultimately your company management will thank you, because it is less expensive to fix small problems rather than to wait for them to become more serious. And it’s much cheaper to fix clutches than knees.



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A system of communicating substandard equipment conditions is an easy fix and can prevent painful, costly personal injuries. From a humanitarian and financial standpoint,



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