

Multi-vehicle crash closes Interstate 84

by Cheryl McDermott

All involved persons escaped injury in a multi-vehicle crash Monday morning that closed both directions of Interstate 84 about 15 miles west of Arlington for about five hours. A dump truck driver, allegedly driving too fast for the snowy and icy road conditions, apparently set off the chain of the events and was cited by police.

Photo Courtesy: Oregon State Police

According to an Oregon State Police (OSP) news release, Sean H. Bunkley, a 62-year old Amboy, Washington resident was cited for violation of the basic rule and failing to maintain a logbook. Bunkley, driving a dump truck pulling a trailer, was traveling east on I-84 near milepost 123 about 11:15 a.m. January 28 when he lost control.

The truck slammed into the center median, OSP said, and pushed about 60 feet of concrete divider into the oncoming lanes of traffic. The dump trailer spun around and demolished 180 feet of guard rail before jackknifing and coming to a stop, blocking both eastbound lanes.

Two cars and a pickup attempted to avoid the dump truck, but the pickup hit the median barriers, now in the westbound lanes, then one of the cars rear-ended the pickup.

Troopers said a logging truck was unable to stop in time, but managed to avoid the other cars and pickup by steering into the ditch. The driver didn't, however, escape a collision completely. Before driving into the ditch, his logging truck struck the dump trailer which caused it to flip over an embankment and slam into the two cars.

That final impact pushed the cars into the dump truck and completely blocked both lanes.

Oregon Department of Transportation closed the highway, and reopened it to traffic about five hours later.

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