

Police: Fatigue contributes to fatal crash near Canyonville

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

CANYONVILLE, Ore. -- Oregon State Police (OSP) troopers are continuing the investigation into Thursday morning's fatal traffic crash northbound Interstate 5 about four miles south of Canyonville. One person died and another received non-life threatening injuries. Next of kin notification was done by Anaheim Police Department and further investigation indicates fatigue as a contributing factor. The passenger in the pickup was killed when the driver reportedly fell asleep and ran into the logging truck, lawfully stopped on the highway shoulder - OSP photo According to OSP Sergeant Lynn Withers on June 12, 2008 at approximately 5:30 a.m. a 2003 GMC Sierra pickup driven by Servando Lopez Castillo, 55, from Pasadena, California, was northbound in the left lane of Interstate 5 near milepost 91 when the driver reportedly fell asleep, drifted to the right across the lanes and onto the right shoulder where the pickup crashed into the back of a fully loaded log truck lawfully stopped on the shoulder. The pickup's right front passenger, Miguel Manuel Favela, 47, from Pasadena, California, died at the scene. He was using safety restraints. Lopez Castillo received non-life threatening injuries and was transported to Mercy Medical Center in Roseburg where he was treated and released. Safety restraint use information is not available. The log truck's driver, John Bartlett, 59, from Grants Pass, was not injured. Barlett, driving for Swanson Group Aviation out of Grants Pass, reportedly stopped on the freeway shoulder to check his log load and had just gotten into the truck's cab when the pickup crashed into the back of the rear trailer. OSP troopers from the Roseburg Area Command office are continuing the investigation with the assistance of the Douglas County District Attorney's Office. This is the second fatigue-related fatal traffic crash investigated by OSP troopers this week on Interstate 5. The first happened Monday afternoon northbound on Interstate 5 south of Albany, and the investigation is also continuing into that crash. Drowsy driving is a serious problem that leads to thousands of motor vehicle crashes each year around our country. A report sponsored by the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research, National Institutes of Health, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration identified critical aspects of driving impairment associated with sleepiness to include reaction time, vigilance, attention, and information processing. A typical sleep-related crash has the following characteristics: * The problem occurs during late night / early morning or midafternoon. * The crash is likely to be serious. * A single vehicle leaves the roadway. * The crash occurs on a high-speed road. * The driver does not attempt to avoid a crash. * The driver is alone in the vehicle. Driving pattern factors recognized by experts as increasing the risk of drowsy driving and related crashes include driving between midnight and 6 a.m.; driving a substantial number of miles each year and/or substantial number of hours each day; driving in the midafternoon hours (especially for older persons); and driving for longer times without taking a break. The full report is available on NHTSA's website at http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/drowsy_driving1/Drowsy.html. The Oregon State Police and ODOT join NHTSA and traffic safety partners in providing information to help reduce the risk of being involved in a drowsy driving-related incident or crash. Some signs to help tell a driver to stop and rest include: * Difficulty focusing, frequent blinking, heavy eyelids * Trouble remembering the last few miles driven, missing exits or signs * Yawning repeatedly * Drifting from lane to lane, tailgating, excessive slowness or speed * Feeling restless and irritable For long trips, take along a companion to help keep alert and to drive if you become tired, and schedule rest stops every two hours to include getting out of the vehicle, walking around and stretching. Additional information is available on ODOT's website at <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/COMM/drowsydrivingtips.shtml>.