

Salem Woman Killed in Head-on Crash with Semi on Icy Hwy. 20

by Cheryl McDermott

A 20-year old Salem woman was killed Friday afternoon when she lost control of her small car on ice and snow-covered Highway 20 about three miles east of the Santiam Junction, crashing nearly head-on with a commercial truck towing a trailer, said authorities.

Kara Marie Copeland of southeast Salem was westbound on Highway 20 near milepost 78, about ¼ mile east of Lost Lake when the accident occurred about 12:40 p.m. December 29, said Sgt. Eric Brown with the Bend command office of Oregon State Police (OSP).

A Salem woman was killed Friday in a nearly head-on collision with a semi-truck and trailer on ice and snow-covered Highway 20. OSP Photos. She lost control of her 2001 Toyota Corolla lost control as it was negotiating a slight right-hand curve on the ice and snow-covered road, where it crossed into the oncoming lane and collided nearly head-on with a 2001 Volvo Truck towing a trailer loaded with 48,000 pounds of lumber.

Copeland was using safety restraints and her car's airbags deployed, but she was pronounced dead at the scene.

The truck driver, 51-year old Ronnie L. Simmons of Scappoose, was not injured. He was also using safety restraints, said OSP.

Both vehicles came to rest blocking the westbound lane of traffic, shutting the road down to one lane for about 4 1/2 hours. According to the news release, both vehicles came to rest blocking the westbound lane of traffic. Oregon Department of Transportation personnel assisted with traffic control and used the remaining open eastbound lane of the two-lane highway to shuttle traffic through in both directions. Westbound traffic was backed up to the top of Santiam Summit, about three miles away, said Sgt. Brown, and the highway was reopened about 5:15 p.m.

Oregon State Police troopers from both Albany and Bend Area Command offices responded to the crash, and assistance was provided by Sisters Fire Department personnel.

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