

**REPORT #:**  
24MI149

**REPORT DATE:**  
06/15/2026

**INCIDENT DATE:**  
Fall 2024

**WORKER:**  
61-year-old

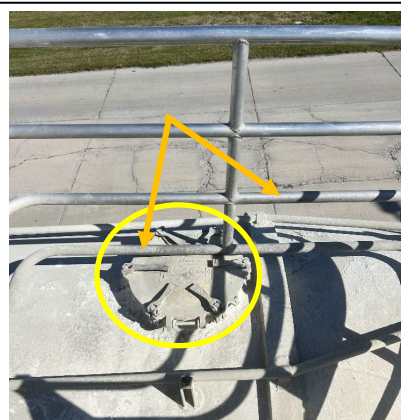
**INDUSTRY:**  
Site Preparation Contractors  
238910

**OCCUPATION:**  
Dry Bulk Trailer Driver

**SCENE:**  
Powdered Concrete Vendor

**LOCATION:**  
Vendor Platform

**EVENT TYPE:**  
Fall from height



View of deployed platform rails lifted by the driver (orange arrows), and round hatch with rails on it blocking hatch opening (yellow circle). Source: Responding police.

## GENERAL INDUSTRY FATALITY NARRATIVE

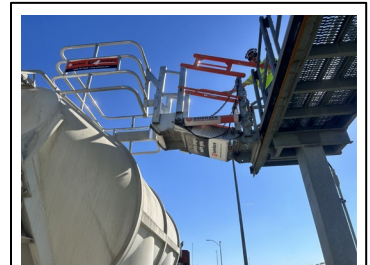
### Driver Falls from Dry Bulk Trailer at Vendor Site

#### SUMMARY

At approximately 11 AM, a truck driver was attempting to open a hatch on top of a dry bulk trailer at a vendor's facility when he fell suffering a fatal head injury. The tandem Polar pneumatic bulk trailers were to be loaded with a concrete product and hauled to a construction site. The concrete vendor provided a platform with a SafeRack G4 SAS deployable gangway system with guardrails that extend out onto the top of the trailer. The gangway is normally locked in the raised position and deployed by pressing a foot pedal to unlock it and manually push it out over the trailer top. Once deployed, it's held in place by its own weight. Retrieval of the gangway is initiated when the user is back on the platform (not the trailer) by manually pulling a rope to begin lifting. Once moving, springs lift the platform back to the raised position, where it is locked. The driver of a Kenworth Truck, working alone, deployed the system from the platform and walked across the gangway to the top of the trailer, within the protective guardrails of the access platform. However, the trailer was positioned such that the access platform railings rested on the hatch, blocking several latches. While standing on the trailer top, he lifted the access platform guardrails off the hatch. As he lifted, the system springs rapidly retracted the gangway and access platform up and toward the vendor platform. At first, he continued to hold onto the bottom two guardrails. The retraction happened quickly, taking only 2–3 seconds. He was pulled in an uncontrolled way into the gap between the trailer and platform, where he lost grip on the rails and fell headfirst 13.5 feet to the concrete. The official cause of death was blunt trauma to the head; manner of death was accident. Other drivers also reported lifting the gangway railings up while standing



Ground view of the vendor platform with the gangway and platform in the raised position. Source: MIOSHA.



Ground view of the vendor platform with the gangway and platform deployed over the trailer. Source: MIOSHA.

## SUMMARY CONTINUED

on the trailer to access blocked hatches. The vendor had documented monthly safety inspections of the system. Post-incident testing showed the gangway system was functioning properly. However, of note, the manufacturer sells platforms specifically for pneumatic bulk trailers that are shaped to not block hatch latches. The existing gangway can be retrofitted with a bulk trailer platform to alleviate alignment issues (see recommendations).

## REQUIREMENTS

### **408.1011(a): ACT 154, MICHIGAN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT:**

An employer shall furnish to each employee, employment and a place of employment that is free from recognized hazards that are causing, or are likely to cause, death or serious physical harm to the employee. *The employer did not furnish employment and a place of employment which were free from recognized hazards that were causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees due to employees not utilizing the SafeRack gangway system adequately in that employees were lifting the system to undo the hatch on the top of the pneumatic dry bulk tank trailers. Among other methods, feasible and acceptable abatement methods to correct this hazard could include:*

- Create a written procedure to operate the SafeRack gangway system.
- Develop a written safety audit procedure to ensure compliance with those procedures.
- Implement unplanned safety audit inspections to ensure compliance with safety procedures.
- Develop a written enforcement procedure to ensure employees realign the semitrailer when not aligned correctly with the SafeRack gangway system.
- Develop a quarterly management ride-along with drivers of bulk trailers to ensure safety procedures are being utilized and enforced.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **To prevent falls, MIFACE recommends bulk trailer employers (E) and vendors (V) should:**

- (V) Retrofit the existing gangway with an available pneumatic bulk trailer access platform sized to fit over bulk tank trailers without blocking hatch access. (<https://saferack.com/industries/cement-frac-sand/pneumatic-trailer-loading/> ).
- (V) Provide signage, visual marking and/or a video monitor feed so drivers can align bulk tank hatches to the center of the gangway system from the driver's location.
- (E) Assess each vendor's site requirements and fall protective systems, develop written safe procedures and train drivers to perform the safe procedures prior to driver assignment to that site.
- (E) Ensure compatibility with each vendor passive (guardrail) or active (fall restraint or arrest) fall protection requirements. Conduct periodic field verification and auditing of safe work procedures.

## RESOURCES

MIOSHA [1986]. [Occupational Safety and Health Act, Act 154 of 1974](#). Lansing, MI: Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

MIOSHA [2018a]. [MIOSHA General Industry, Part 2, Walking-Working Surfaces](#). Lansing, MI: Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration, General Industry Safety and Health Division.

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