

REAL LIFE LESSONS

FROM TRUCK DRIVERS INJURED AT WORK



LOCATION IS EVERYTHING!

There is an old saying among successful business owners that location is everything. Not only is this true in business but it also applies to several other circumstances, especially the situation that James T. found himself in last August. James T. has been a long haul driver for decades and boasts that he has driven through each of the lower 48 and all but three of the Canadian provinces. He even jokes about being the first to drive to Hawaii as soon as they complete the bridge. This experience has put him on the road in many strange places on many occasions. However, he did not realize just how “dangerous” it was to park and sleep where he did in southern Florida on that summer night.

James T. was dispatched to deliver a load just outside of Miami. He had never been to this particular location before, but he was advised that he should park his truck inside the fenced area for the night if he arrived after the shipping/receiving department had closed. This recommendation came from the receiver through the dispatcher, so it was credible information. Unfortunately for James T. he did arrive too late and even more unfortunate for him, there was no room to park his truck inside the fenced area. Not to worry though, he saw a couple of other trucks parked immediately beside the fence but on the outside of it so he considered it to be safe.

Early in the morning hours (between 2 and 3) James T. awoke to the sound of breaking glass. When he jumped from his sleeper berth to see what had happened he was hit in the head and slumped unconscious on the floorboard. James T. became another victim of the “truck invasions” that routinely occurred in this part of Miami.

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The police report described James T.’s injuries as minor, with a few contusions and lacerations to his head. Medical records better described his injuries as a possible concussion with a deep laceration to his forehead that required 15 stitches. James T. described it as a situation that could have been avoided by following a few, simple precautions.

To begin with, listen to what the receiver has to say about local conditions. They know best what the “criminal” risk may be. Next, do not assume that the presence of other trucks parked outside the fence means that it is safe. That may mean nothing more than additional “targets” are available for the truck invaders. Finally, be bold and contact the local law enforcement agency and ask for their recommendation. They may be able to direct you to another location that is considered safe.