

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION**

**Southeastern District
Metal and Nonmetal Mine Safety and Health**

**Accident Investigation Report
Surface Nonmetal Mine**

Fatal Powered Haulage Accident

**Watson Trucking
at
Benchmark Carolina Aggregates, Incorporated
Neverson Quarry
Bailey, Wilson County, North Carolina
Mine I.D. 31-00074-6YT**

July 8, 1997

By

**Donald B. Craig
Supervisory Mine Inspector**

**Darrell Brennan
Mine Safety and Health Inspector**

**Originating Office
Mine Safety and Health Administration
135 Gemini Circle, Suite 212
Birmingham, Alabama 35209**

**Martin Rosta
District Manager**

Accident Investigation Report
Surface Nonmetal Mine

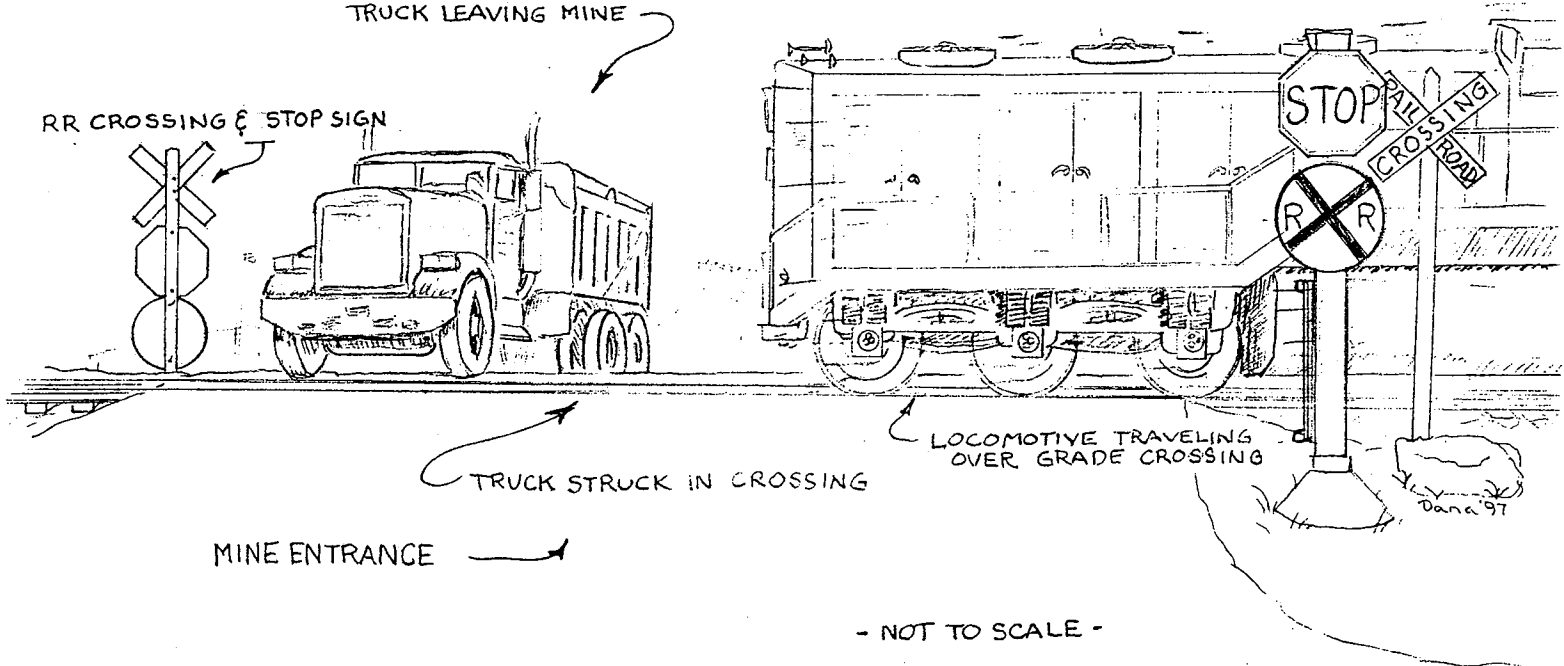
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TRUCK LEAVING MINE

RR CROSSING & STOP SIGN



- NOT TO SCALE -



Authority—This report is based on an investigation made pursuant to the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, Public Law 91-173, as amended by Public Law 95-164.

Section A—Identification Data

1. Title of investigation: Powered Haulage Accident	2. Date MSHA investigation started: July 9, 1997
3. Report release date: December 11, 1997	4. Mine: Neverson Quarry
5. Mine ID number: 31-00074-6YT	6. Company: Benchmark Carolina Aggregates, Inc.
7. Town, County, State: Bailey, Wilson County, North Carolina	8. Author(s): Donald B. Craig & Darrell Brennan

Section B—Mine Information

9. Daily production: N/A	10. Surface employment: 24
11. Underground employment: N/A	12. Name of coalbed: N/A
13. Thickness of coalbed: N/A	

Section C—Last Quarter Injury Frequency Rate (HSAC) for:

14. Industry: 4.72	15. This operation: 0.0
16. Training program approved: No	17. Mine Profile Rating: N/A

Section D—Originating Office

18. Mine Safety and Health Administration Coal Mine Health and Safety District No. :	Address:
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Section E—Abstract

A contract trucking company truck driver was leaving mine property after getting a load of aggregate. The truck driver was struck by a Norfolk Southern railroad engine while crossing the railroad track. Both sides of the track cross were posted with railroad crossing signs. Witness heard the train sounding it's warning horn. The cab was sheared from the truck and ended up approximately 198 feet east of the point of collision. The victim was found approximately 180 feet east of the point of collision. The victim died moments later.

Section F—Mine Organization

Company officials:	Name	Address
19. President:	Floyd T. Morgan	P.O. Box 13983 Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
20. Superintendent:	C. Jimmy Manning	P.O. 458 Bailey, NC 27807-0458
21. Safety Director:	Glenn Moore	P.O. 13983 Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
22. Principle officer—H&S:	C. Jimmy Manning	P.O. Box 458 Bailey, NC 27807-0458
23. Labor Organization:	None	
24. Chairman—H&S Committee:	None	

GENERAL INFORMATION

Nancy Hughes, contract truck driver, age 44, was fatally injured at about 1:40 p.m., on July 8, 1997, when she drove her truck into the path of an on-coming train. Hughes had fifteen weeks experience in this job. The victim had not received training under the requirements of 30 CFR, Part 48.

Glenn Moore, safety director for Neverson Quarry, notified MSHA's Sanford, North Carolina field office of the accident at 2:15 p.m. on July 8, 1997. An investigation was started the next day.

Neverson Quarry, a multiple-bench granite operation owned and operated by Benchmark Carolina Aggregates, Incorporated, was located off U.S. Highway 264-alternate near Bailey, Wilson County, North Carolina. The principal operating official was C. Jimmy Manning, superintendent. The mine normally operated one 10 hour shift a day, five days a week and employed 24 persons.

The operation consisted of a crushing and finishing plant and an open pit quarry. Granite was drilled, blasted, crushed, sized, and stockpiled on site. The finished product was sold for use in concrete, asphalt, and for other purposes in the construction industry.

Hughes was employed by Watson Trucking Company. Neverson Quarry sold aggregate to Watson Trucking Company who was delivering it to a local Interstate construction site.

The last regular inspection of the Neverson Quarry was completed on April 23, 1997.

PHYSICAL FACTORS INVOLVED

The railroad crossing where the accident occurred was maintained by Norfolk Southern Corporation and had a 50 feet right-of-way from center-line to each side of the track. The crossing was not provided with a crossing gate or flashing lights. Warning signs of the crossing, a railroad crossing

sign, and a stop sign were in place on each side of the railroad tracks and visible to on-coming traffic in both directions. Visibility at the crossing was not restricted by any permanent structures or landscaping. A whistle post was 1337 feet on the west side of the crossing.

The road from the highway to the scale house was maintained by Benchmark Carolina Aggregates, Incorporated and went north to south. This road was paved to the railroad right-of-way and graveled from the other side of the tracks to the scale house. The road was slightly inclined at the railroad crossing on both sides of the tracks.

There were no adverse weather conditions at the time of the accident.

The dump truck was a three axle, 1975 Ford, identified as W-4 and classified as a for hire property vehicle with a gross weight of 54,000 pounds. At the time of the accident, the truck was loaded with over 15 tons of stone.

Due to the severity of the damage to the cab and the truck, no attempt was made to test the brakes. A visual inspection of the braking system at the drive axles did not reveal any leaks or damaged lines, hoses or fittings. The service brakes were shoe/drum type with an air chamber on each rear axle.

The locomotive was a Norfolk Southern Corporation 1995 GE unit, traveling east when the accident occurred.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

On the day of the accident, Nancy Hughes (victim) reported to work at the Watson Trucking office at her normal starting time of 7:00 a.m. to receive work assignments. She was instructed to go the Neverson Quarry to get rip-rap stone and haul it to a construction site near the mine. She had made several runs during the day without incident and was leaving the mine with another load when the accident occurred.

At 1:34 p.m. Hughes drove to the scales, was weighed, and then pulled off the scales and proceeded to the crossing, which was approximately 185 feet away. As she was crossing the tracks, she was struck by the train.

The train's warning horn blasts were heard by employees from various areas of the mine prior to the accident.

Several witnesses to the accident stated that Hughes slowed down as she approached the tracks but did not appear to make any attempt to stop for the train.

The locomotive struck Hughes' truck on the driver's side of the operator's cab. The cab was severed from the truck's frame by the collision, resulting in Hughes either falling out of, or being thrown from the cab, approximately 180 feet from the point of impact. The cab came to rest approximately 198 feet from the point of impact. It could not be determined whether Hughes was wearing a seat belt when the accident occurred.

Monty Malldin, customer driver, was at the scale house when the accident occurred. He yelled to the scale house personnel to call for help and then ran to Hughes who was laying face down in a ditch to the south side of the tracks. Malldin rolled Hughes over and detected a pulse and noted that her breathing was labored. When the emergency medical technicians arrived about ten minutes later, she did not have a pulse.

Hughes sustained multiple traumatic injuries and was pronounced dead at the scene by the medical examiner for Wilson County, North Carolina. The body was taken to Wilson County Hospital.

CONCLUSION

The direct cause of the accident was failure to stop at the railroad crossing and yield to the train.

VIOLATIONS

Watson Trucking Company

Citation No. 4522610 was issued December 9, 1997, under the provisions of Section 104(a) of the Mine Act for violation of standard 56.9100(a):

A fatal accident occurred at this operation on July 8, 1997, when a Norfolk Southern Corporation freight train struck a 1975 Ford dump truck crossing railroad tracks on the mine haul road. The driver of the truck failed to stop and yield to an oncoming train at the crossing, which was posted with warning signs and stop signs on both approaches to the tracks.

/s/ Donald B. Craig
Donald B. Craig
Supervisory Mine Inspector

/s/ Darrell Brennan
Darrell Brennan
Mine Safety and Health Inspector

Approved by:



Martin Rosta
District Manager

APPENDIX

1. List of Persons Present During the Investigation.
2. Data Sheet, MSHA Form 2000-58.

APPENDIX 1

The following persons were present during the investigation:

Benchmark Carolina Aggregates, Incorporated

Floyd T. Morgan	president
Jim Sprinkler	area manager
Glenn Moore	safety manager
C. Jimmy Manning	superintendent
Melvin Raines	office manager
Laverne Morgan	weighmaster
Danny Wells	front-end loader operator

Watson Trucking

Norman Jeffrey Watson	owner
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North Carolina State Highway Department

D. C. Nelson	state trooper
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North Carolina Medical Examiner

Thomas Hooper, M.D.	medical examiner
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Norfolk Southern Corporation

T. E. Sizemore	senior claims agent
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North Carolina Department of Labor

Mine and Quarry Bureau

Scott Hartness	mine safety and health representative
James C. Pate	mine safety and health representative

Witnesses

Nell Coley	employed by S.T. Wooten Corporation of Wilson, NC
Jason Peters	independent trucker
Monty G. Malldin	independent trucker

Mine Safety and Health Administration

Donald B. Craig
Darrell Brennan

supervisory mine inspector
mine safety and health inspector



Section A—Victim Data

1. Name Nancy Strickland Hughes		2. Sex <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female		3. Social Security Number 0641	
4. Age 44		5. Job Classification Truck Driver			
6. Experience at this Classification 15 weeks known			7. Total Mining Experience Not Known		
8. What activity was being performed at time of accident? Leaving mine property with loaded dump truck		9. Victim's Experience at this Activity 15 weeks known		10. Was victim trained in this task? No record	

Section B—Victim Data for Health and Safety Courses/Training Received (related to accident)

	Date Received
11. None	
12.	
13.	
14.	

Section C—Supervisor Data (supervisor of victim)

15. Name Norman Jeffery Watson		16. Certified <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
17. Experience as Supervisor		18. Total Mining Experience	

Section D—Supervisor Data for Health and Safety Courses/Training Received (related to accident)

	Date Received
19. None	
20.	
21.	
22.	

23. When was the supervisor last present at accident scene prior to the accident? Was not	24. What did he do when he was there?
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25. When was he last in contact with the victim? At start of shift at 7:00 a.m.	26. Did he issue instructions relative to the accident? No
27. Was he aware of or did he express an awareness of any unsafe practice or condition? No	