



Operating Landing Gear

A driver arrived at the customer site and parked his trailer in the yard. He went to lower the trailer by adjusting the landing gear. As he pushed the landing gear crank, he felt his elbow pop with sharp pain. He had to have surgery and extensive therapy to repair and strengthen his elbow. The worker's compensation claim was \$32,000.



Recommended Practices

For the Worker:

- 1) When parking the trailer, be sure to park it on level ground and preferably on a trailer pad.
- 2) Connect and disconnect the trailer in an area of yard that has good grading.
- 3) When operating the landing gear, use two hands and square feet up to handle.
- 4) When lowering and raising the landing gear, ensure it is in the proper gear. When the trailer is loaded, the landing gear should be in low gear.
- 5) When possible, use fifth wheel to raise the trailer instead of using landing gear.
- 6) If the trailer is not too low, instead of using landing gear, use the fifth wheel to raise the trailer by backing the tractor under the trailer and using the fifth wheel or frame rail ramps (if equipped) as lift points.

For the Employer:

- 1) Ensure adequate preventative maintenance for tractors and trailers, including lubrication of the landing gear.
- 2) Ensure that both landing gear plates are of the same size and type.
- 3) Ensure that there is good grading in the yard.
- 4) Investigate pneumatic or hydraulic landing gear systems or motorized devices to operate crank.
- 5) Purchase trucks and shunt trucks with the same 5th wheel height.
- 6) Train driver and shunt drivers how to set trailer to facilitate trailer connections and disconnection.
- 7) Purchase trucks with ramps on the rear frame of the tractor or add ramps on to the frames after purchase to allow drivers to use the fifth wheel to raise the trailers.

