

TRANSPORT - 2 HGV drivers have sustained injuries when driving through puddles at a customer's site

WHAT HAPPENED

A company has reported two recent incidents where HGV drivers sustained whiplash injuries whilst their vehicles were going through puddles on a third party's site. Commonly, these types of injuries can occur when the driver unexpectedly strikes a submerged object or a wheel goes into a pot-hole concealed beneath the water.



These incidents are a reminder that some puddles can develop into sizable bodies of water. The road conditions can differ on every site due to a variety of environmental factors such as floods, poor housekeeping and maintenance regimes.

Drivers must ensure that it is safe to drive through puddles. Remember that driving through them incorrectly could cause serious damage to their vehicle, potentially incurring significant costs and, more concerningly, could result in a personal injury.

Shallow puddles are not the most challenging obstacles to overcome, but it's still important to remember that, on the other side of a puddle, grip levels could be lower. Adjust your speed to suit the depth of the water and if the obstruction is deeper, take more time and care when crossing it.

LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

- If you suspect it's too deep, or you can't be sure, if possible, always find another way to your destination.
- If the puddle is shallow enough to drive through, try and spot any objects that may cause damage to your vehicle's wheels, tyres, or suspension, potentially leaving you mid-puddle with a problem. This way you can pick a safe path across.
- Once you've confirmed you can drive through the puddle and determined your route, keep your vehicle in a low gear.
- Once you exit the other side – and especially if the puddle is on the deep side – if you are able to, pause for a moment to let any excess water drain away and flow back to where it came from.
- If you can't, be aware that grip levels on the road ahead will be diminished, as fluid from the puddle is dropped along the asphalt by other vehicles.
- These risks also apply when you are out of the vehicle and on foot. Please refer to your slips, trips and falls risk assessment in the driver's handbook. Walking through muddy potholes can also cause injuries!

LOCATION: CONSTRUCTION/DELIVERY SITE
ACTIVITY: TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS / DELIVERY
SUB ACTIVITY: DRIVER AWARENESS

ALERT STATUS: Normal
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