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Media Release

Nevada Department of Transportation Employee Seriously Injured in Active Work Zone Crash on US Highway 50 near Fallon

On Wednesday, August 14, 2013 at approximately 9:25 am, Troopers from the Nevada Highway Patrol were dispatched to a crash on US Highway 50, at the intersection with Sheckler Cut Off or State Route 117, just west of Fallon in Churchill County. The section of the four-lane highway in this area was reduced to one lane of travel in each direction, and the posted speed limit was reduced from 65 miles per hour to 55 mph, as this was an active work zone where Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) personnel were resealing the surface of the highway. Several employees were operating equipment while others were performing highway maintenance and repair-related duties on foot.

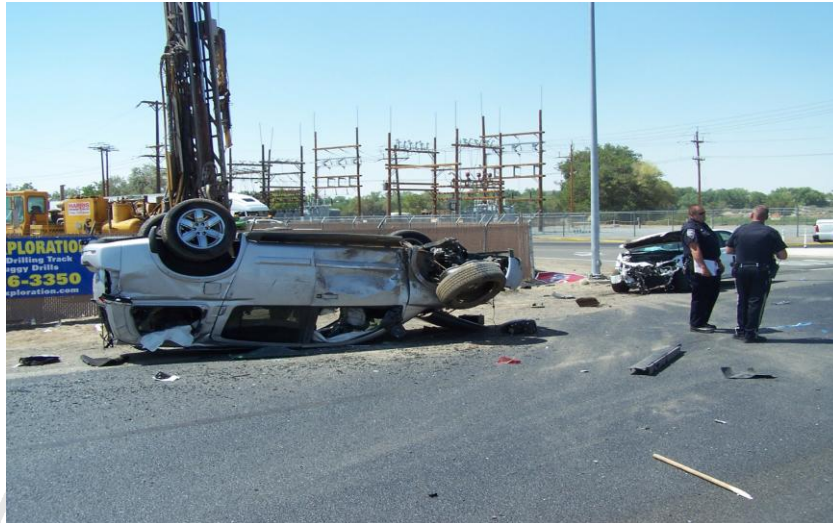
The sequence of this morning's crash happened when the driver of a white 2002 Toyota Camry 4-door sedan, 88-year-old Belle C. Currie of Fallon, attempted to turn south onto Sheckler Road from the westbound travel lane. Ms. Currie failed to observe a silver 2012 Nissan Armada traveling east on Highway 50 driven by 34-year-old Jamie L. Sweetser of Fernley. Sweetser had her 3 young children and another family member riding in the SUV with her. The front of the Toyota struck the left side of the Nissan causing the SUV to rollover onto its roof.

Moments after the vehicles collided, and while both were still in motion, is when NDOT employee Michael D. Spanier of Hawthorne was struck. He had been walking while performing roadway maintenance and sustained very serious injuries in the event while the 6 other motorists' injuries ranged from nearly none to minor in nature.

All seven were transported to Banner Churchill Community Hospital in Fallon by ground ambulance. After his medical evaluation at the Fallon hospital, Spanier was airlifted to Renown Regional Medical Center in Reno by Care Flight while the others were treated and then released.

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The Major Accident Investigation Team was dispatched to investigate the accident. Witnesses or anyone with additional information are encouraged to contact Trooper Chris Kelly at (775) 689-4661 or at ckelly@dps.state.nv.us regarding case number NHP-130801203. Once the investigation is completed, which may take 30 or more days, any and all traffic-related charges will be filed at that time.



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