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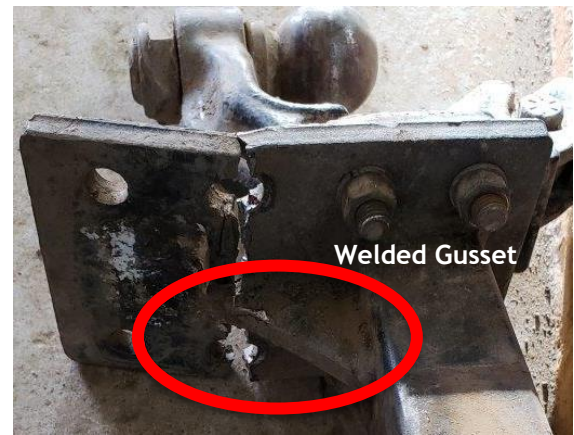
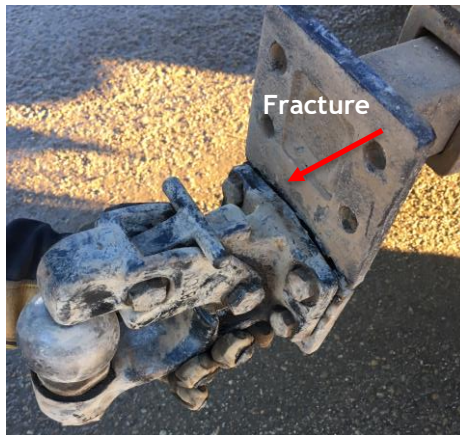


FAILED HITCH RESULTS IN POTENTIALLY SERIOUS INCIDENT

DESCRIPTION:

Workers departed a work site towing a portable air compressor. While driving on a major highway, the trailer fell to the ground behind the vehicle. The mounting plate on the pintle hitch had broken in half along the upper bolt holes.

The driver managed to bring the trailer under control and safely pulled over.



THE HITCH WAS RELOCATED TO THE UPPER MOUNTING POSITION AS EMERGENCY MEASURE TO REMOVE THE COMPRESSOR FROM THE HIGHWAY.

CAUSE:

The welded gusset on back of the hitch mounting plate did not extend to the lower mounting holes which allowed the steel to flex and fracture.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS:

Inadequate towing equipment for the weight and type of equipment being towed. A thorough visual inspection was not performed during maintenance or pre-trip.

COMPANY-IDENTIFIED CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

- » The break-away safety restraint and the means of attaching it to the vehicle must have an ultimate strength of not less than the gross weight of the vehicle or trailer being towed.
- » Inspect all hitches to ensure the gusset extends at least to the centre of the hitch on the lowest setting.
- » Defective hitches and pintle mounts with cracks or concerning damage must be removed from service immediately.