

## Accident near Old Highway 6 turn-off sends one to hospital

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Wednesday, 15 May 2013 21:21 -

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**Personnel from Imperial EMS, the Imperial Volunteer Fire Dept. and Chase County Sheriff's Office responded to an accident Friday morning when a vehicle turned too soon and ran into a semi-trailer before it had passed at the Old Highway 6 turn-off. (Imperial Republican Photo)**

**By Jan Schultz**

**The Imperial Republican**

Emergency personnel sped to the scene of what could have been a tragic accident Friday about 11:30 a.m. MT near the Old Highway 6 turn-off east of Imperial.

However, one driver escaped with just some bruising and the other was unhurt in the accident that closed the highway temporarily.

A 1996 Buick Park Avenue driven by Delores Fortkamp, 67, of rural Wauneta was eastbound on U.S. Highway 6.

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Her blinker was on to turn left at the Old Highway 6 turn-off, as she met a 1994 Peterbilt semi with a tanker trailer owned by Frenchman Valley Coop, traveling west. Dave Harmon, 57, of Imperial was operating the semi-trailer.

Chief Deputy Mike Dukes said Fortkamp turned too soon before the semi had passed and her vehicle collided with the right front axle of the trailer, impacting the car's right front side.

The collision severed the airlines to the trailer and the brakes locked up, Dukes said. That sent the semi-trailer into the ditch on the north, but Harmon was able to pull it back onto the highway and stop safely, taking out a road sign on the way.

Dukes said it was lucky that Harmon had unloaded the trailer prior to the accident, or it might have traveled over the top of the car.

Due to the impact, Fortkamp's driver's side door was damaged and wouldn't open. She was conscious throughout the ordeal, as emergency personnel worked to get her out.

She was transported by Imperial EMS to Chase County Community Hospital, where she was treated and released later that day.

Dukes said she sustained some major bruises but otherwise was unhurt. Harmon reported no injuries.

The Fortkamp car was a total loss, and the semi-trailer sustained an estimated \$10,000 in damage to the trailer, Dukes said.

The highway was closed for about 40 minutes as emergency personnel worked to remove Fortkamp from the vehicle, and as the wreckage was hauled off from the middle of the

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highway.

Traffic on the east side of the accident was rerouted onto the rural road to the north. Most of the traffic on the west waited for the highway to reopen, or had the opportunity to be rerouted if necessary, Dukes said.

Fortkamp was issued a citation for failure to yield the right-of-way.