

# Safety Alert



## Be prepared for Sunstrike



Sun strike or sun dazzle is when the sun is low on the horizon and your sun visors are not low enough to prevent it from getting in your eyes. When it is on the horizon, blocking the sun can mean blocking the view of traffic ahead, which makes it dangerous.

Shorter drivers are at more risk of experiencing sun strike because the sun visor is less effectively placed.

The most common sun strike-related crashes involve people pulling out from a side street or driveway into the path of another vehicle, or rear-ending a stationary or slow moving vehicle. Sun strike also increases risks for cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists, as they are more easily hidden in the glare due to their size. If you are riding or walking, be careful at intersections on sunny days. Don't assume a driver has seen you. Even if you are not affected by sun strike, someone else may be.

Here are some common times when sun strike occurs:

- During Winter- the sun is closer to the horizon, and also the sun rises and sets during the time most people are going to work. If you commute east in the morning and west to go home, you will get sun strike twice per day.
- Exiting a tunnel or built up area- if the tunnel is long enough, your eyes will adjust to the relative darkness, thus when exiting into bright light, you can't see. Tall buildings can shade you from the sun and when you move to less urbanised streets, the sun can be a problem
- Reflections- as we know the sun can and does reflect off windows of buildings, other vehicles windscreens, and when it's wet, the road surface

## Reducing the danger of sun strike and avoid crashing

- Be prepared for possible sun strike when driving at sunrise or sunset, especially when turning or driving towards the sun.
- Be especially careful during winter, when sun strike is more likely to occur because the sun is lower in the sky
- Keep your windscreen clean, inside and out. Dust and grime on the windscreen can make the effects of sun strike much worse.
- Do not clean your windscreen (while driving) while you are experiencing sun strike
- Wear polarised sunglasses, as these are best at combating glare
- Use your car's sun visors to block the sun
- Turn your headlights on so your vehicle is easier to see
- If you experience sun strike, and you are travelling long distances, try to time your journey (especially for example along the Whakatane- Opoitoki Highway) and/or pull over and wait a wee while until your eyes adjust or visibility improves (i.e., sun has dipped a bit lower down that sun strike is now no longer an issue)
- Be extra careful if snow has fallen and the sky is clear- sunlight shining on snow can cause 'snow blindness', which produces similar effects to sun strike.

**Every driving day is different, conditions change,  
so adapt your driving to suit**

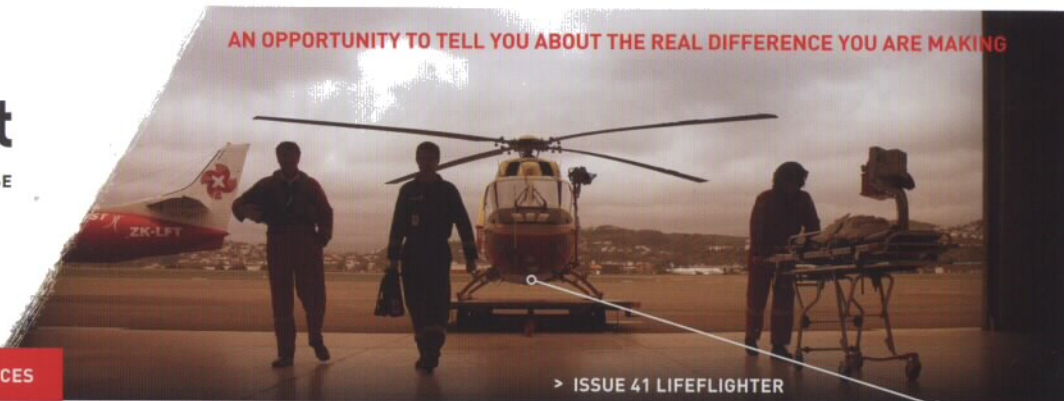




# Life Flight

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## A TRUCKER'S MIRACLE

Colin Tandy barely clung to life after his truck rolled 80 metres down a Marlborough cliff last year. Colin says, "I owe you guys my life and wish to thank everyone who was involved in my rescue and recovery. YOU GUYS ROCK!! I love you all, thank you."

I experienced sunstroke like never before, it was complete whiteout. I braked but felt my logging truck get sucked sideways down a huge steep bank. Adrenaline shot through me as the truck rolled again and again, bashing me against the roof and seat.

When the truck stopped rolling I immediately dragged myself out through a window. The pain was very intense but my determination to survive was overwhelming. Blood was running down my face and I noticed huge cuts on my arms and feet. I couldn't move my legs and couldn't get a grip on the bank. It was very, very scary.

Pain was coming over me in huge waves. I remember staring into the blue sky, thinking of my children and praying. My thoughts were racing away; my life was passing away.

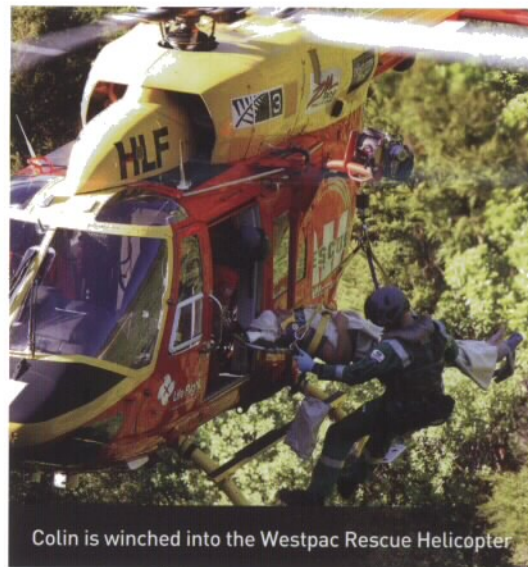
My heart jumped when I heard the distinctive sound of the Westpac Rescue Helicopter rotor blades. I listened to the wonderful people around me organising my air-lift and knew I was being saved. The feeling of comfort from the noise of the helicopter was amazing! It will stay with me for the rest of my life.

As I was winched up by the Life Flight team I felt the chopper's downdraught on my face. I could see the belly of the chopper; it was an incredible sight that gave me so much reassurance. I knew I was in the best hands.

I had eight broken ribs, broken hips, a split pelvis, a ripped back vertebra, and heaps of cuts on my head and arms.

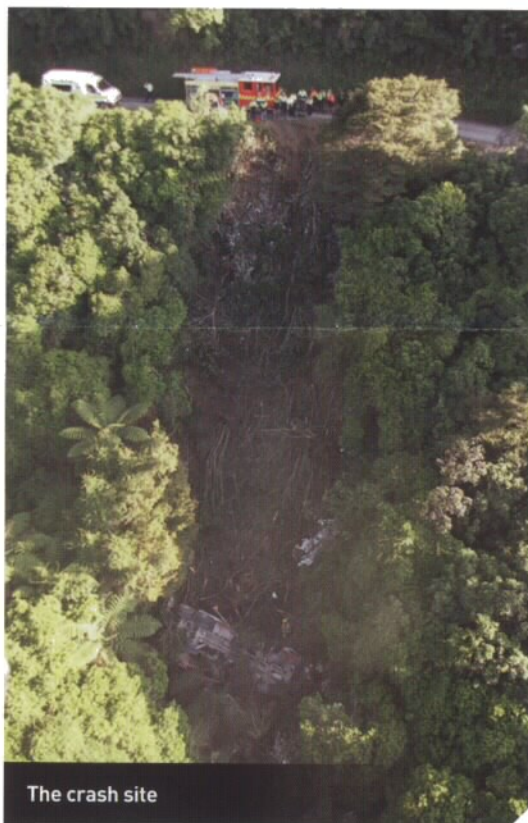
This accident will affect me for as long as I live, but I have made it my mission to get well as soon as possible. I start working again in a week and I can't wait to get back on the road.

Thank you, Colin Tandy ■



Colin is winched into the Westpac Rescue Helicopter

Photo: SCOTT HAMMOND, The Marlborough Express [marlboroughexpress.co.nz](http://marlboroughexpress.co.nz)



The crash site

PRINCIPAL SPONSOR RESCUE HELICOPTER

**Westpac**



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