By Russ Pankonin
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Imperial's emergency services kicked into high gear Friday evening, April 24, when a loaded semi-tanker trailer rolled over on its side south of Enders.

Hours of training and preparation for just such an incident paid off big, said Imperial Fire Chief Bryan Dannatt and County Emergency Manager Paul Kunnemann.

Everything went like clockwork—just like it's supposed to, Dannatt said.

Kunnemann agreed, noting this is when the training of Imperial's emergency services really shines.

About 6:30 p.m. Friday, Imperial EMS and firemen were summoned to the junction of Hwys. 6/61 south of Enders near the lake.

The driver of a semi pulling a tanker loaded with starter fertilizer apparently lost control as he tried to make a left hand turn from Hwy. 6 onto Hwy. 61 at the junction.

The Kugler Company truck then slid and rolled over on its right side.

Imperial EMS transported the driver, Floyd Chapin, 58, of Benkelman, to the Chase County Community Hospital.

He was released from the hospital later that evening.

When Dannatt and the firemen arrived, the trailer was leaking a small amount of fertilizer. Other than that, the trailer contained the fertilizer.

Dannatt said he immediately called Kunnemann to the scene as well as a representative from the Dept. of Roads.

The firemen did what they could to contain the small leak.

Kugler Company had already notified Lamar Fertilizer, a Kugler distributor, to bring trucks to the scene to pump off the fertilizer.

However, with the truck on its side, the fertilizer shifted to the top of the compartments away from the outlet pipes.

Sinner's wreckers arrive on scene

About 7:15 p.m., two massive wreckers from Sinner's Paint and Body Shop in Wauneta arrived.

After assessing the scene, Lloyd Sinner and his crew maneuvered the wreckers into position to upright the overturned rig.

After about three hours of preparation, Sinner's crew was able to right the truck.

Kunnemann said that was something to see as the loaded trailer swayed from side to side before the liquid inside came to rest.

After that, Lamar Fertilizer off-loaded the fertilizer into another Kugler tanker that had arrived at the scene.

Dannatt said emergency personnel were on scene until about 11 p.m.

Traffic was diverted for about four hours while Sinner's crew was working on the truck.

Southbound traffic towards Benkelman was diverted through the Enders Lake Rec. area.

Northbound traffic on Hwy. 61 was diverted to the road below the dam and then around on the county roads leading to Enders Lake Golf Course.

These county roads also carried both directions of traffic from Hwy. 6.
After Sinner’s completed their work, eastbound traffic was restored.