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Eliot, Maine, fire and rescue workers respond to a head-on collision on Route 236 in Eliot on Thursday.

Photo by Jackie Ricciardi

2 rushed to hospital

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ELIOT, Maine - Two drivers were seriously injured in a head-on collision on Route 236 near Northern Pool and Spa on Thursday afternoon.

Police Chief Ted Short said the accident occurred at 3:45 p.m. when Roy Lohndorf, 18, of South Berwick, traveling northbound in his green Mitsubishi Gallant, crossed over the center line and struck a Dodge Dakota driven by Christopher Janes, 37, of Kittery, in the southbound lane.

Both vehicles landed in the shoulder on the southbound side of the road.

It took rescue personnel close to an hour, using the Jaws of Life, to extricate Lohndorf from



his car. Short said the severe damage to the area surrounding the driver's legs made it difficult to remove him from the vehicle. Rescuers ultimately tore off the roof of the Mitsubishi to get Lohndorf out of the car.

Lohndorf was then transported by ambulance to Wentworth-Douglass Hospital in Dover, N.H., with leg injuries, Short said. A medical helicopter had been called to airlift him from the scene, but it was not able to land because of foggy conditions, the chief added. Lohndorf was in stable condition late Thursday night, according to Susan Jennison, a Wentworth-Douglass nursing supervisor.

The Jaws of Life were also used to extricate Janes from his truck. Rescue personnel removed the roof to free him, but the rescue did not take as long as Lohndorf's.

Janes was then taken by ambulance to Portsmouth Regional Hospital with serious injuries to his lower extremities, Short said.

Later in the evening, Jeanne Perry, a nursing supervisor at Portsmouth Regional Hospital, said Janes was undergoing surgery but that she could not comment further on his condition.

Once the drivers were transported to the hospital, police and fire personnel began clearing the scene. Both Janes' and Lohndorf's cars were totaled in the accident, with their front ends crushed and both bumpers ripped from the vehicles. The airbags in both vehicles had been deployed, and pieces of glass and plastic from both mangled vehicles were tossed along the road.

Traffic was stopped along Route 236 for more than an hour as police, fire and rescue personnel cleared the scene. The rush-hour traffic on the northbound side backed all the way into Kittery, as cars traveling southbound were forced to turn around and go down Route 236 to access side roads.

Fire and rescue personnel from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard assisted at the scene.

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