



FATALITY NARRATIVE

Dairy Worker Struck by Bull*

Industry: Dairy farm
Task: Herding cows to milking parlor
Occupation: Laborer
Type of Incident: Struck by animal

Release Date: June 12, 2012
Incident Date: December 30, 2008
Case No.: 08WA065
SHARP Report No.: 71-111-2012

On December 30, 2008, a laborer at a dairy farm was kicked and/or trampled by a bull. The 31-year-old victim worked for 4 1/2 years as a laborer at the dairy farm and was considered by his coworkers to be an experienced dairy worker. The victim went to a pen to herd the cows into the milking parlor. As he was herding them along the yard's transport lane toward the milking parlor he realized that he forgot to open the gate so the cows could enter the parlor. The cows began to jam up at the closed gate. He tried but was unable to open it. The victim asked a coworker to help him push the cows back so that the gate could be opened. Soon they noticed that some of the cows were walking back to their pen. Next, the coworker saw the victim walking back toward the pen. A short while later another coworker in the milking parlor saw the victim walking toward him with blood on his face saying that the bull had "got him." The victim was driven to a hospital by his employer where he died an hour later of injuries to his chest. It appears that he was kicked and/or trampled by the bull. The employees were trained not to enter a pen where there was a bull and cows, as it was considered to be too dangerous. After the incident the employer sold the bull and several others.



Requirements

- Employers must develop, supervise, and enforce a written accident prevention program that is effective in practice. See WAC 296-307-030.

Recommendations

Employers of workers who work with dairy animals should:

- Provide employees with knowledge of animal behaviors and habits.
- Train employees in the hazards associated with animal handling and in safe handling techniques.
- Design, construct, and maintain a safe animal handling facility.
- Consider using artificial insemination to eliminate the need for dairy bulls.
- Exercise extreme caution with dairy bulls at all times. Dairy farmers should use facilities to feed, water, exercise, and breed bulls so they do not come into direct contact with employees.

Workers should:

- Always have an accessible escape route when working in close quarters with animals.
- Plan ahead to allow plenty of time and do not hurry when moving cattle, especially bulls.
- Be especially cautious when working around dairy bulls, as their behavior can be very unpredictable.
- Avoid startling an animal. Make them aware of your approach and move calmly.

State Wide Statistics: This was number 71 out of 72 work-related fatalities in Washington State during 2008, and was number 7 out of 7 agriculture-related fatalities.

**This bulletin was developed to alert employers and employees of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State and is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.*

Developed by Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. The FACE Program is supported in part by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277.



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