

INCIDENT FACTS

REPORT #:

71-180-2019

REPORT DATE:

April 10, 2019

INCIDENT DATE:

August 18, 2018

VICTIM:

43 years old,
6 years with employer

INDUSTRY:

Apple orchard

OCCUPATION:

Orchard manager

SCENE:

Apple bin stacking area

EVENT TYPE:

Machine/ATV



ATV at incident scene.

[For a slideshow version, click here.](#)



This narrative is an alert about the tragic loss of life of a worker and is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or the cause of the injury. Developed by WA State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program 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 grant# 5U60OH008487). For more information visit www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/FACE.

Orchard Manager Dies When ATV Crashes into Apple Bin

SUMMARY

A 43-year-old orchard manager died when the all-terrain vehicle (ATV) he was operating struck an apple bin causing him to be thrown 32 feet from the point of impact.

He had worked for 6 years as the manager at his employer's apple orchard.

The manager was operating his personal ATV (he resided on the property) in the orchard while supervising a nighttime spraying operation. He stopped to speak with an employee at about 10:30 p.m. No one else saw him for the rest of the evening. An employee arriving for work the next morning found his body lying near his ATV. It was still running with the headlights on.

State investigators and the county Sheriff's office investigated the incident scene. They found that the manager was operating the ATV along an orchard gravel and dirt road at a high rate of speed when the ATV went into a 58-foot straight skid and struck an apple bin. The ATV then rolled over and came to rest 20 feet from the point of impact. The manager was found on the road 12 feet from the ATV. He was not wearing a helmet. He died of massive head injuries. The employer did not ensure that his employees wore DOT approved helmets while operating ATVs. Investigators noted the operation of the ATV at an excessive speed as a primary cause of this incident.

REQUIREMENTS

- Employers must provide personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure that employees are protected from injury. Wherever appropriate, employers must ensure that employees use PPE. See [WAC 296-307-10005\(1\)](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS

FACE investigators concluded that, to help prevent similar occurrences:

- Operate ATVs at speeds safe for conditions and terrain.
- Employers should create and enforce a policy to ensure that employees use helmets when operating ATVs.
- Employers should consider providing and requiring employees to use company ATVs.
- Employers should consider installing governors on ATVs to prevent high-speed operation.
- Always wear a DOT approved helmet while operating ATVs.
- Take a hands-on ATV safety training course.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions and warnings for safe operation of ATVs.



Location where the manager was ejected from the ATV when it struck an apple bin at a high rate of speed.