

SAFETY NOTES

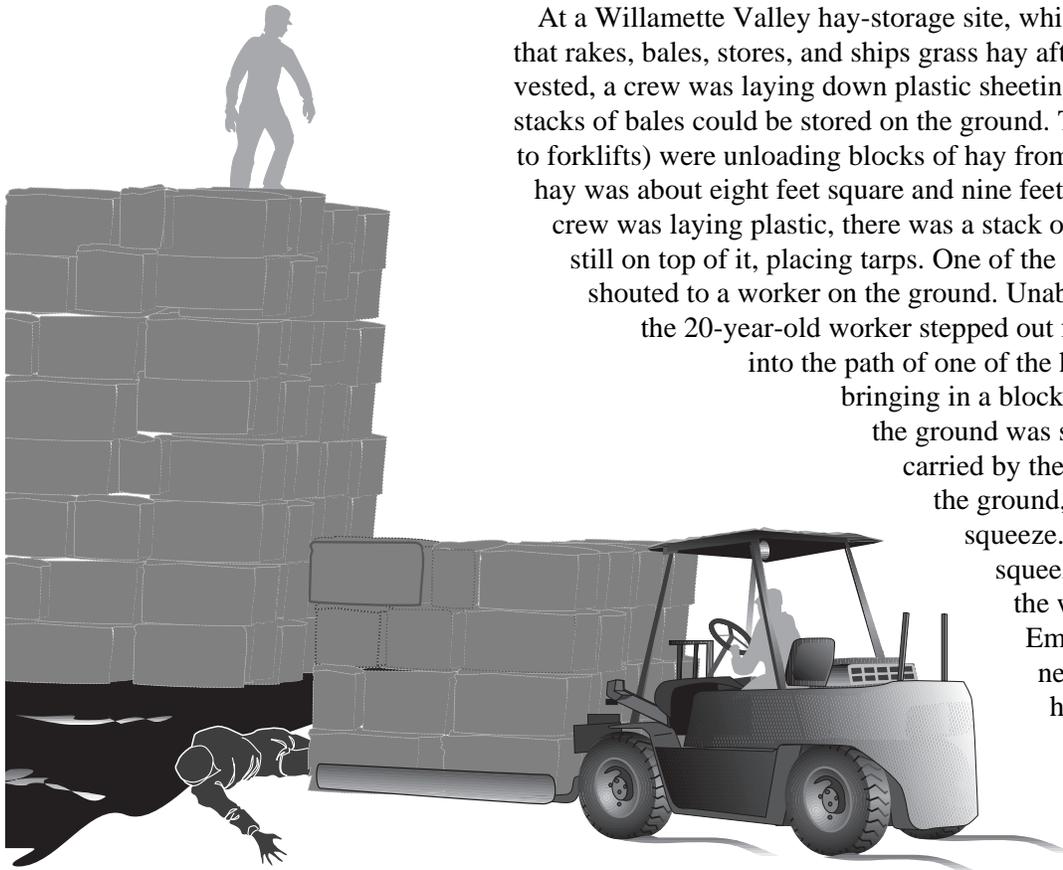
Department of Consumer & Business Services
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division
Salem, OR 97310

Fatality Report

Accident type Struck/crushed by vehicle
Industry Agriculture/hay operation
Employee job title Laborer/hay crew

Description of accident

At a Willamette Valley hay-storage site, while working for a company that rakes, bales, stores, and ships grass hay after the seed has been harvested, a crew was laying down plastic sheeting and old car tires so that stacks of bales could be stored on the ground. Two hay squeezes (similar to forklifts) were unloading blocks of hay from a trailer. Each block of hay was about eight feet square and nine feet high. Next to where the crew was laying plastic, there was a stack of hay blocks with workers still on top of it, placing tarps. One of the workers atop the stack shouted to a worker on the ground. Unable to see who had called, the 20-year-old worker stepped out from the base of the stack into the path of one of the hay squeezes, which was bringing in a block of hay. The worker on the ground was struck by the block of hay carried by the hay squeeze, knocked to the ground, and run over by the hay squeeze. The operator of the hay squeeze felt a bump and found the worker under a rear tire. Employees who had witnessed the accident ran to help and called emergency services. The victim died at the scene.



Investigation findings

OR-OSHA investigators determined that the ground crew of laborers had been permitted to work under and near elevated loads as the hay squeezes delivered blocks of hay to the stacks to be stored. The employer was cited for a serious violation and fined \$5,000.

To prevent similar accidents

- Never permit employees to work under and near loads
- Ensure that drivers of vehicles bearing large loads have adequate mirrors and warning-sound devices
- Train workers to always look out for equipment operators who may not be able to see them
- Place a higher priority on safety than on production, and provide a “safe zone” around busy unloading equipment

Applicable standards

OAR 437-02-221(13)(c)
OAR 437-04-1610(f)