

**Case 522. 35-year-old veterinarian died when he was buried under corn silage from an outdoor horizontal bunker silo at a dairy farm.**

A 35-year-old male veterinarian died when he was buried under corn silage from an outdoor horizontal bunker silo at a dairy farm. The bunker silo was approximately 200 feet across, 30 feet high in the middle and curved down to approximately 2 feet at the silo edge. The dairy farm contracted with Firm 1 to provide office, veterinary and nutritional support services. The decedent, who worked for Firm 1, was working alongside one of the dairy employees to gather feed samples to check on the nutritional value of the feed and the dairy's feeding practices. The dairy employee dropped the decedent off by his truck after the decedent gathered the necessary information. It was still early morning and dark outside. It appeared that the decedent walked away from his truck and to the 30-foot tall "feed out" face of the bunker silo. He may have been attempting to take a temperature reading; part of the hand-held thermometer used for temperature readings was found in the vicinity of the collapse. A large section (approximately 2000 pounds) of corn silage broke off the face, engulfing him. The dairy farm employee he had ridden with earlier in the morning arrived at the bunker silo to gather more feed. This employee noted "something sticking out of the pile". The dairy employee and an employee from a third company on-site pulled the decedent from under the corn silage and began CPR after first calling 911 and the dairy farm management. Emergency response arrived and the decedent was transported to a local hospital where he was declared deceased.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious citations to the employer at the conclusion of its investigation.

Serious: 408.1011(a): ACT 154, MICHIGAN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT: An employer shall furnish to each employee, employment and a place of employment that is free from recognized hazards that are causing, or are likely to cause, death or serious physical harm to the employee.

The employer did not furnish employment and a place of employment which were free from recognized hazards that were causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees in that employees were exposed to struck-by and engulfment hazards. On *Date*, 2018, an employee was standing near an approximate 30-foot-tall ledge of corn silage when the feed out face collapsed and engulfed the employee resulting in a fatality. The employee was standing near the southwest end of the horizontal bunker silo located in *Street Address, City, MI Zip Code*. The employer failed to establish a documented policy concerning the minimum safe distance from which employees can walk and work near the feed-out face ledge of a horizontal bunker silo.

Among others, one feasible and acceptable method to correct this hazard includes, but is not limited to, taking samples from front-end loader bucket after it is moved to a safe distance from the feedout face when sampling silage.

*(Note: MIFACE removed the date and the site address from both citations)*

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Among others, one feasible and acceptable method to correct this hazard includes but is not limited to establishing documented safety training to employees concerning horizontal bunker silo hazards and establishing a safety program with documented safety procedures.