

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

Establishment Name	Community Recycling & Resource Recovery	Inspection Number	315072637
Management Contacted	Dave Baldwin	Title	Manager

Information on Injured

Covered by Workers' Compensation Yes No

Name, Address and Phone Number	Occupation
Armondo Ramirez	Irrigator/Labor
[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	

Use additional forms(s) as needed.

Witness Name(s) and Title

*Check box preceding name if confidentiality is given.

*	Names and Title(s)	Address	Phone No.	Signed Statement?	
				YES	NO
	James Bartlett	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		X
	Avalos Mejio	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		X
	Edwardo Flores	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		X
	Jose Guillermo Martinez	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		X

Summary

On October 12, 2011 at 1350hrs. the Division received telephonic notification of an incident that occurred that morning at 1130hrs. and resulted in the deaths of two men at this organic waste recycling facility in Lamont, California. There is a storm drain system below ground that carries water and debris to a catch basin on the property. The water is then used in the windrow composting process. There are approximately 14 points of entry to the drain system ranging from three to ten feet deep.

At the time of this incident three men were in the process of cleaning out the storm drain system in preparation for winter rains. The point of entry where they were working was a twenty-four inch by ten foot cement shaft. At the bottom of the shaft it bells out to approximately six feet with three pipes leading into it and one pipe leading to the catch basin. Employees had released the contents of a water truck into the shaft in an attempt to wash the buildup at the bottom of the shaft out into the catch basin. The water backed up and had to be pumped out. EE#1 then attempted to use a high powered hose from the water truck to break up the mass at the bottom. EE#3 states that in an effort to gain better control of the hose EE#1 sat on the rim of the hole and braced his feet against the other side of the opening. Employees then picked up a portion of an extension ladder that was leaning against the fence and put it into the hole to brace their feet.

EE#3 had turned away from the shaft and when he looked back he saw EE#1 standing on the ladder in the hole, to a point that his shoulders were at ground level. He told EE#2, an employee of a farm labor contractor, that he was feeling sleepy, and then "went down the ladder". It cannot be determined if he climbed down the ladder or if he lost consciousness. EE#2 was attempting to go into the hole to rescue EE#1. EE#3 states that he pulled him away from the hole but when he released him so that he could call for help EE#2 entered the shaft and collapsed.

When first responders arrived both employees were non-responsive. They were extricated from the drain system and evaluated. Both victims were pulseless and not breathing. CPR was started and they were transported to Kern Medical Center in Bakersfield, CA. Hydrogen Sulfide gas is a natural by-product of the green waste decomposition process. When Kern County Environmental Health took gas readings of the shaft with their 5-gas monitor at 2-3 feet below the surface it registered 200ppm which is the maximum value the monitor would read.

The employer received citations for serious accident-related violations of sections 5155(c)(3), 5157(c)(3), 5157(d)(5), 5157(d)(9) and 5157(g) of the California Code of Regulations associated with this accident.

Use additional sheet(s) as needed.

		Signature	Date
Prepared by:	CSE, IH		
Reviewed by:	DM/SR, IH		