Amusement Park Hazards Fatality File



One Dead, Several Hurt in Ohio State Fair Ride Accident

One person was killed and several others were seriously hurt after a ride malfunction at the Ohio State Fair in Columbus Wednesday, officials said.

Ohio State Highway Patrol Superintendent Col. Paul Pride said a trooper reported the incident at around 7:24 p.m. at the Ohio State Fair, which began Wednesday. One person died and seven people were injured.

Witnesses reported that the ride that malfunctioned was the Fire Ball, which spins and swings passengers in a pendulum-like motion.

Ohio Gov. John Kasich said he has ordered a full investigation and ordered all rides closed until additional safety inspections can be conducted. “We will get to the bottom of this,” Kasich said at a press conference.

Tyler Jarrell, 18, of Columbus, Ohio, was identified by the Ohio State Highway Patrol as the person killed.

Officials named six of the injured as Tamika Dunlap, 36, of Reynoldsburg, Ohio; Russell Franks, 42, of Columbus, Ohio; Keziah Lewis, 19, of Columbus, Ohio; Jacob Andrews, 22, of Pataskala, Ohio; Jennifer Lambert, 18, of Columbus, Ohio; Abdihakim Hussein, 19, of Columbus, Ohio.

A video of the incident posted on YouTube showed seats of the ride breaking off and bodies flying through the air. A witness told NBC News that “the whole car went flying off and over the side while in motion.”

Sisters Britney and Kiley Neal were next in line to ride the Fire Ball when the row of seats detached.

“The ride was going as normal, and then all of a sudden you see people flying out, and then the guy hit the emergency stop button, which then made the seat fly off and people flew off as well,” Britney told TODAY on Thursday.

The girls’ mother Kristy Neal, who was in a different part of the Ohio State Fair, said one of her daughters called her in hysterics.

“I just ran towards the direction of the rides. There were two state troopers beside me. I don’t know if they had even heard anything at that point and I said, ‘Something terrible has happened. I need to find my daughters,’” Kristy said.

William Brown told NBC News in an email that his wife was on the ride before the accident occurred. “I was in total disbelief,” Brown said. “My wife just got off that ride before the accident happened.