Dairy Worker Safety – Stats & Facts



FACTS

1. People working in farm dairies are exposed to hazards involving machinery and moving parts, animals, slips, trips, falls, exoskeletal injuries, electrical and chemical hazards, and burns from hot water.
2. Slips and trips are one of the most common accidents when working in and around farm dairies. Many farmers have slip-related accidents, which substantially reduces their capacity for work.
3. Injuries to arms or wrists not only make it hard for the farmer to work, but put a heavier workload on other workers.
4. Slips and trips often happen in the pit during milking, when handling cattle, getting cows in for milking, and during maintenance and cleaning.
5. It is more likely that workers will slip or trip on slippery surfaces, poorly designed steps, divided attention, poor footwear, speed, obstacles and cluttered workspace.

STATS

- The dairy product manufacturing as a whole has nearly halved its TRC rate, falling from 9.4 injuries and illnesses per 100 full-time workers.
- The non-fatal injury rate among workers in dairy cattle and milk production was 5.6 injuries per 100 full-time workers and 14.6 illnesses per 100,000 full-time workers. The total injury and illness rate was 5.7 per 100 full-time workers, compared to the private industry average of 3.4. 15 Thirty-five workers in this industry died due to work-related incidents.
- Workers regularly exposed to cattle infected with tuberculosis have been shown to be at higher risk for contracting latent and active tuberculosis, as bovine tuberculosis can also infect humans. A study conducted in 2013 demonstrated that dairy workers had more than twice the risk of testing positive for tuberculosis as compared to non-dairy workers, and that over half of the 311 dairy workers tested positive for latent tuberculosis.
- Dairy workers with tasks in the milking parlor had more than five times risk of carpal tunnel syndrome as compared to dairy workers with non-milking tasks, indicating that occupational risks and exposures vary greatly in the dairy industry, even with the same establishment. © National Center for Farmworker Health.
- Musculoskeletal injuries are common among dairy parlor workers. A cross-sectional study of 452 dairy parlor workers found that 76% had at least one

body part affected by an occupationally related musculoskeletal injury, most commonly in an upper extremity.