Grocery Store Safety Fatality File



Workers share sadness, concern after deadly accident at Harnett grocery distribution center

DUNN, N.C. (WNCN) – Workers described a horrifying scene early Saturday morning when a worker was hit by a forklift and suffered injuries deputies said led to his death.

“I (saw) all the supervisors running through the factory, so we knew something was happening,” said one worker who spoke to CBS 17 on the condition of anonymity out of concern he’d lose his job for talking publicly.

“A gentleman ran past me and he was extremely distraught,” another worker said.

The injured worker turned out to be 22-year-old Dereck Carrero of Hope Mills, the Harnett County Sheriff’s Office said Monday.

Medics took Carrero to the hospital with what deputies said was a significant, life-threatening head injury. He died at WakeMed after being on life support.

Colleagues described Carerro as a hard worker who liked to help others.

“If you were having trouble, he’d stop what he was doing and lose time to help you,” one co-worker said.

“He was a really positive guy. Liked to keep everyone around him motivated,” another added.

Those same workers shared concerns with CBS17 about the facility, which is operated by ADUS Distribution and provides grocery distribution services for Food Lion.

“The amount of people in there, all the traffic on the aisle, it’s like a beehive almost,” one worker said.

“There’s people flying past each other,” another added. “It’s tight conditions.”

Deputies said Monday, they reported the case to OSHA North Carolina’s Department of Labor acknowledged to CBS 17, their Occupational Safety and Health division did receive a report of an incident at the facility and that, as of Tuesday morning, an inspection has been opened with the company.

In response to some of the concerns shared by workers, ADUSA Distribution shared this statement:

Safety is a priority at ADUSA Distribution. We have safety protocols and expect every associate to follow them. As a result of this situation, we are conducting a thorough investigation, and that includes talking with associates and ensuring safety remains top of mind for every associate who works at our facilities.

Meanwhile, coworkers told CBS 17 their thoughts are with Carrero’s family.

“It’s really sad how it all happened. For his family right here at Christmas time,” one worker said. “It’s just really bad.”