

Safe Operation of Livestock Squeeze Chute Functions

SafetyNet #: 145

Introduction

Squeeze chutes are operated by one or more persons and routinely used as part of livestock handling operations. Safe operation of livestock squeeze chutes can prevent most injuries and sometimes deaths, to employees and/or livestock during handling operations. Typically, injuries from livestock squeeze chutes include contusions, cuts, abrasions, and broken bones to employees and livestock. California Code of Regulations [Title 8, Section 3203 \(7\)](#) [1] requires employees be trained on the equipment they use in the workplace. Training consists of both reading the operating manual AND 'hands on' training from an experience, trained operator.

General Recommended Safe Practices for Operation of Livestock Squeeze Chutes

- When using a livestock squeeze chute, communication between those working at the chute is essential to safely coordinate participant's actions for loading and unloading livestock into the chute with the worker operation of chute hydraulics and mechanics.
- Prior to use, always inspect the livestock squeeze chute for defects or leaks and to assure they are securely attached at connection points. In addition, examine and test levers, latches, and moveable chute parts to assure they are not damaged and are functioning properly. Tighten loose bolts and nuts. Check hydraulic hoses and fittings where applicable. Lubricate all fittings on established maintenance schedule
- If a livestock squeeze chute fails the pre-use inspection, notify your supervisor and remove the chute from service by attaching a red tag that states "DO NOT USE." Complete red tag with appropriate information.
 - Date
 - Reason for Red Tag
 - Name of observer
- Do not wear loose clothing or jewelry in the vicinity of moving parts on the livestock squeeze chute. Wear pants, boots and tie back long hair or wear under a cap or hard hat.
- Keep the livestock squeeze chute work area clean and free of trip hazards. Clean up chute

and surrounding area as soon as cattle work is finished.

- Avoid startling or spooking livestock during handling operations.
- Be alert and aware of potential sudden changes in conditions when handling livestock.
- Always utilize good animal husbandry practices when handling livestock.
- Ensure side access panels are fully engaged (closed)
- Keep feet, arms, hands, and fingers clear of gates and other moving squeeze chute parts.
- Inspect chute for sharp edges and ensure stable footing as the animals exit the chute.

Squeeze Chute Safety:

There are four basic areas of a chute that are inherently hazardous:

1. The head gate,
2. Side squeeze,
3. Side exit/access and
4. Rear gate.

Safety risks can be broken down into moderate and severe within each of those areas. Review this [poster](#) [2] with employees and as applicable students.

Equipment Hydraulic Chute Safety:

- Safe, efficient and trouble free operation of your squeeze chute requires the that you, and everyone else who will be using or maintaining the squeeze chute, read and understand the Safety and Maintenance information contained within the Operator's Manual.

Training: Equipment Operator's Manual:

- Safe, efficient and trouble free operation of the squeeze chute requires everyone using or maintaining the squeeze chute, read and understand and all safety precautions and other safety and maintenance information contained within the Operator's Manual.. Only authorized and trained operators are allowed to operate the equipment. Following good safety practices will protect you and also the people around you. Do not risk injury or death by ignoring good safety practices.
- Keep the operating manual handy for frequent reference and to pass on to new users. Call your squeeze chute manufacturer with any questions or if you need assistance or for additional copies of the manual.
- Chute operators must demonstrate proficiency in operation of chute to site specific trainer before using facility.

Operating Manual Instructions:

- Have employees sign-off on reading the squeeze chute operation manual and observe all safety precautions in the equipment operation manual. Besides operation, note emergency shutdown, adjustment, and troubleshooting procedures. Especially note “Warning” or “Danger” notifications identified in the operation manual. Read this manual carefully to learn how to use the equipment.

Manual Read: _____ Date: _____

Employee Name _____

Employee Signature: _____

- Conclude employee training with a documented ‘hands’ on demonstration.

Employee Field Demonstration of ‘Hands on’ knowledge

Instructor: _____

Date: _____

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Helpful Links

1. [Squeeze Chute Safety](#) [2]
 - [Animal Research and Teaching](#) [3]
 - [Occupational Health](#) [4]
 - [Personal and Workplace Safety](#) [5]
 - [Equipment Safety](#) [6]
 - [Physical Hazards](#) [7]

External links

1. http://www.progressivecattle.com/downloads/2011/01/0111pc_poster.pdf [2]

Source URL (modified on 01/08/19 11:00am): <https://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/safetynet/safe-operation-livestock-squeeze-chute-functions>

Links

[1] <https://www.dir.ca.gov/title8/3203.html>

[2] http://www.progressivecattle.com/downloads/2011/01/0111pc_poster.pdf

[3] <http://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/categories/animal-research-and-teaching>

[4] <http://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/categories/occupational-health>

[5] <http://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/categories/personal-and-workplace-safety>

[6] <http://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/tags/equipment-safety>

[7] <http://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/tags/physical-hazards>