

Pennsylvania Amazon Warehouse Conditions Examined

Amazon.com is widely seen as a reliable provider of well-priced books, music, household products and other goods. The problems that allegedly occurred in its Pennsylvania warehouse, however, show that even the most trusted companies may have room for improvement in how they treat their workers.

The Morning Call newspaper reports that during the summer, the Amazon warehouse reached extreme temperatures, with the heat index going above 110 degrees at times. Paramedics stood by to assist workers who became ill due to the heat.

Current and former warehouse workers – some temporary workers and some full-time employees – told the newspaper that they felt pressure to work quickly, even in the severe heat. The collapse of 15 workers in early June prompted an employee and a doctor to contact the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

OSHA's inspection led Amazon to install extra fans and provide bandanas to workers, but the warehouse remained very hot. Amazon says that it plans to add air conditioning to more of its warehouses.

Risks of Warehouse Injuries

Employees and temporary workers at any warehouse are at risk for a number of injuries, including those from heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Other possible injuries include repetitive stress injuries, back injuries and crush injuries.

Workers' compensation is available to employees who suffer work-related injuries, illness or death. Employees who are injured may be compensated for lost wages and medical bills. Although in most situations injured employees do not have the

right to sue the employer for damages, workers' compensation provides a safety net for employees.

Whether they are in Pennsylvania or elsewhere in the country, workers should not have to suffer extreme temperatures or other dangerous conditions.