

## N E W S R E L E A S E

News Release No.: 2016-89

Date: September 14, 2016

### **Cal/OSHA Cites Company Operating 1,500-Foot-Long Zip Lines with No Emergency Brakes Following Serious Rider Injuries**

**San Bernardino**—Cal/OSHA has cited Big Pines Ziplines \$85,000 for serious and willful safety violations uncovered following an unreported rider accident that resulted in a major injury. Cal/OSHA investigators found that Big Pines let riders reach speeds of up to 55 mph on lines more than a quarter-mile long that had no effective emergency braking system. Cal/OSHA also learned that Big Pines continued to operate unsafe zip lines even after the division ordered them to stop.

On August 9, 2014, a member of the public suffered a broken leg while riding one of Big Pines' zip lines in Wrightwood. Wrightwood Canopy Tour LLC, doing business as Big Pines Ziplines, never reported the injury to Cal/OSHA, as is [required by law](#). Cal/OSHA learned about the injury in February of this year when contacted by an attorney for the injured rider. Also in February, a second patron riding the zip lines suffered a broken leg.

When Cal/OSHA contacted the business, the owner acknowledged the first accident and told investigators the zip lines were shut down. However, Cal/OSHA subsequently learned that the lines were in fact open to the public and operating. In March, Cal/OSHA opened an investigation and found numerous safety and regulatory violations.

“When zip line owners operate without appropriate safeguards in place, they jeopardize the health and safety of their patrons and their workers,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum. “California law is clear about the requirements for zip line safety, and shortcuts are unacceptable.”

Cal/OSHA ordered Big Pines to temporarily cease operations until violations could be fixed. However, Cal/OSHA learned that Big Pines was not only operating zip lines, but also put workers in danger by compelling them to test unapproved safety features on the zip lines as seen in videos taken by Big Pines.

Cal/OSHA cited Big Pines Ziplines for four safety violations. These include one willful-serious and three that were willful-regulatory in nature. The willful-serious violation was for failing to have proper emergency brakes. Proper brakes stop riders from hitting the zip line cable, swinging violently, and slamming into padding at the end of a zip line at high speeds and suffering serious injury or even death. The willful-regulatory violations were for operating without a valid permit of compliance, failing to report a serious injury, and for reopening to the public without correcting safety violations noted in an Order Prohibiting Operation.

A serious violation is cited when there is a realistic possibility that death or serious harm could result from the actual hazardous condition. A willful violation is cited when evidence shows the owner, operator or employer committed an intentional and knowing violation, or is aware that a hazardous condition exists and makes no reasonable effort to eliminate the hazard. More information about the types of citations and penalties that they carry can be found in the [User's Guide to Cal/OSHA](#).

Cal/OSHA posted [an advisory notice](#) in 2014 explaining the requirements for owning and operating zip lines. These include safety inspections by professional engineers and the possession of a valid permit to operate, as well as specific requirements for patron harnesses, brake systems and the use of trees as anchor points.

[Cal/OSHA's Amusement Ride and Tramway Unit](#) is responsible for inspecting and issuing permits to operate temporary amusement rides, inspecting and approving the operation of permanent amusement rides, inspecting and issuing permits to operate passenger tramways, and inspecting permanent and temporary amusement rides and passenger tramways after receiving notification of an injury accident .

Cal/OSHA helps protect workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace in California. [Cal/OSHA's Consultation Services Branch](#) provides free and voluntary assistance to employers to improve their health and safety programs. Employers should call (800) 963-9424 for assistance from Cal/OSHA Consultation Services.

Employees with work-related questions or complaints may contact DIR's Call Center in English or Spanish at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734). The California Workers' Information line at 866-924-9757 provides recorded information in English and Spanish on a variety of work-related topics. Complaints can also be filed confidentially with [Cal/OSHA district offices](#).

Members of the press may contact Erika Monterroza or Peter Melton at (510) 286-1161, and are encouraged to [subscribe to get email alerts](#) on DIR's press releases or other departmental updates.

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