

# PAGE DAIRY ROCKED

## BY NEW BLAST

### Three Saved While Fumes

### Fill Plant

*10:00 Page*  
**\$175,000 Explosion  
Almost Duplicate Of  
Accident On Feb. 20**

*At 11:00*  
Ammonia gas blew up again today at the Page Dairy Co., Wade and Knapp Sts., in a blast which was almost an exact duplication of the one that killed two men and injured 25 other persons at the plant Feb. 20.

Damage was estimated at \$175,000 by Frank Carson, acting deputy fire chief.

Only the early hour of today's blast, at 5:55, when fewer than a dozen employees were at work, was believed to have avoided a repetition of the death and injury toll of the previous explosion.

#### Firemen Rescue Three

No one was injured today, but three persons, one a woman, were rescued by firemen who aided them down ladders after they were trapped by gas on the third floor of the plant.

The blast occurred as John Diems, 5810 Dorr St., night engineer, prepared to open a discharge valve in the engine room. The ammonia line controlled by the valve, broke and the fluid poured from the opening.

Mr. Diems fled from the room just before the gas blew up. He ran back in a moment after the explosion to shut off compressors and block the threat of new explosions.

#### In Dazed Condition

Mr. Diems was found in a dazed condition in the driveway, which runs through the building, by Merle Roundbush, 5638 Stickney Ave. Chased from a first floor warehouse by the blast, Mr. Roundbush remembered that Mr. Diems had been in the engine room and he groped his way along the wall until he found the engineer.

When Walter Ringger, deputy fire chief, arrived at the dairy, what appeared to be black smoke was pouring from the building and the three trapped employees were leaning from windows calling for help.

Chief Ringger turned in a second alarm while firemen raised ladders to rescue Mrs. Eva Kubiak, 4 West Park St.; Clifford Swerking, 720 Spring Grove Ave., and Jack Bridling, 645 Weston St.

Police sent half a dozen ambulances to the dairy as a precautionary measure.

Mrs. Kubiak, who was in the women's dressing room, said the first became aware of the blast when her locker tipped toward her. She ran to a window, opened it and leaned out.

# <sup>Toledo - Page</sup> Dairy Damaged <sup>Co.</sup> By New Blast

## Three Are Rescued From Ammonia Fumes

Continued from First Page

Mr. Swerking and Mr. Breidling, both of whom were rescued down ladders in the Feb. 20 blast, were in the men's locker room.

### Spread Of Flames

Fire set off by the explosion spread to two rooms directly above the engine room—the freezer room on the second floor and a third floor locker room.

Firemen Ernest Malone of the rescue squad was burned slightly while helping to extinguish the blaze. He was given first aid at the scene.

Two Page drivers, Edward Wagner, 40, of 2936 Glenn St., and Richard Flory, 3722 Shelbourne Ave., were in the checking room on the third floor and escaped by running down a back stairway. Julian Byrd, 264 Brand Whitlock Homes, also fled down the stairway from the second floor.

### Another Employee Escapes

James Ladd, 1023 National Ave., who was burned in the explosion in February, escaped from the cold storage room across the driveway from the engine room.

Only other employees in the building at the time were two drivers, Joseph Steinwand, 1014 King St., and Carl Platzke, 334 West Bancroft St., both of whom were in the driveway.

A. B. Endsley, Cleveland, chief engineer for the York Refrigeration Corp., said the damage would be between \$100,000 and \$250,000.

### Concussion Less

Mr. Endsley explained that considerably more fire but less concussion resulted from today's blast because the ammonia gas saturated the air before it was set off, whereas on Feb. 20 the explosion followed the ignition of liquid ammonia.

The York firm, which has been installing a new refrigeration system in the plant, had planned to put it in operation Wednesday after repairing the damage from the first explosion. It will take at least 60 days to repair the damage from today's blast, Mr. Endsley said.

The explosion wrecked machinery and equipment, and the resultant fire badly damaged the two rooms to which it spread. A glass block window, installed to replace a large steel sash window blown out Feb. 20, was shattered again.

Although the plant is closed, the dairy today was making deliveries and planned to accept the offer of other Toledo dairies to help maintain its operations, Henry Page, Jr., general manager, said. Raw milk and ice cream were moved from the Page Dairy this morning.

### 27 Persons Injured In February Blast

The explosion at the Page Dairy Feb. 20 in which 27 persons were injured, two fatally, was caused when a drum of liquid ammonia got out of control and dropped as workmen were charging a new refrigeration system with ammonia, officials reported.

Coroner Paul Hohly ruled the deaths accidental and said the autopsies showed they were caused by inhalation of ammonia vapor.

Fatally injured were Frederick W. Brubach, 71-year-old chief engineer who lived at 1511 Kelsey Ave., and Earl Speweik, 29, of 1038 Belmont Ave., an employee of the

Industrial Insulation Co. Mr. Speweik was working at the dairy installing insulation. The two died in hospitals three days after the blast and fire which did approximately \$12,000 damage to the plant and equipment.

The plant was back in operation the day after the explosion.