



The purpose of the “HOTSHEET” is to advise members of a serious incident or high potential near miss. By sharing this information and acting on the findings, we can reduce the potential for loss cause hazards to other employees, property, and equipment.

EMPLOYEE LOSS: Employee injured in recycling baler and both legs amputated below the knee.

Workers Compensation Claims Cost: \$1,200,000

Incident Description: The employee worked in the city’s recycling center. The baler is used to bale recycling material for shipping. It is believed that the recycling baler was clogged with cardboard. The operator climbed into the baler’s hopper and started to jump up and down on the jammed cardboard. The cardboard jam was cleared, and the employee fell into the baler compactor operation. The baler cycled and the employee’s feet were amputated.

Root Cause: Although there was signage and guarding to prevent the employee from accessing the hopper, there was no process prescribed to safely clear jams within the baler.

Recommended Corrective Action:

- Develop a Lockout/Tagout program to protect employees from machine, and energy related (electrical, pneumatic, etc....) hazards.
- Develop machine specific energy control procedures.
- Develop safe process to clear jams within baler using mechanical device.
- Train affected employees on energy control policy, machine specific energy control procedures, and the new jam clearing process.



This is not the actual baler involved in incident.

