

Eco-Safe Means People-Safe Sustainability Initiatives & Worker Risk Fatality File



Worker Killed in Recycling Facility Conveyor System

A worker at a recycling facility was assigned to monitor and clear materials from a conveyor system used to sort mixed recyclables. During operations, debris became jammed in the conveyor. Instead of stopping and isolating the system, the worker entered the hazard area to remove the blockage while the equipment was still running. As the worker reached into the conveyor, they became **caught between moving rollers and the conveyor frame**, resulting in **severe crushing injuries**.

Coworkers attempted to stop the system and assist, but the worker had already suffered critical injuries. Emergency services responded, but the worker later died due to the extent of the trauma. Investigations into similar OSHA cases have identified contributing factors such as **failure to apply lockout/tagout procedures, inadequate guarding of moving parts, and unsafe work practices in active recycling systems**. These hazards are especially common in recycling environments, where continuous processing and unpredictable materials increase the risk of sudden incidents.

Source: *Osha.gov*