

16. Crushed by lifting arm

A 40-year-old heavy equipment mechanic was killed while troubleshooting a problem with the packing mechanism for a front loading refuse truck. The packing system (or packer) transfers material in the hopper to the debris body of the refuse truck and compresses it at the same time. While troubleshooting a problem with the packer, the victim apparently inadvertently attached an air hose fitted with an air nozzle from the shop's compressed air system to the air actuated valve for the lifting arms of the truck instead of the air actuated valve for the packer. The lifting arms lift the garbage dumpster up and over the cab of the truck and dumps the contents into the refuse truck's hopper during the lifting cycle. When he applied compressed air to the valve for the lifting arms, the valve directed hydraulic pressure from the engine-mounted hydraulic pump and initiated the lifting cycle of the lifting arms. The victim became trapped between the lifting arm on the driver side of the truck and the side of the debris body while the lifting arm was operating. No one witnessed the event, but three co-workers eventually saw the victim in the trapped position and freed him. Emergency services responded, but the victim did not survive.

Citations as Originally Issued

A complete inspection was conducted of the facility. Thus, some of the items cited may not directly relate to the fatality

Citation 1

TDLWD Rule
0800-1-09-.07

Employees were not provided annual refresher training and information on hazardous chemicals in their work area.



The victim was caught between the lifting arm (yellow arrow) when it was in the lifted position and the debris body (red oval).

