Baling and Compacting Work Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. Material jams commonly occur in balers and compactors. Because many machines are automatically activated by the material that flows into them, the compacting ram stops moving when a jam occurs.
2. In some balers or compactors, materials are placed directly into the chamber where they will be compressed. In other models, the materials are fed into a chute or hopper. Fatalities generally have involved situations in which employees entered a compactor to clear a jam, fell into the path of the ram, or reached into the machine while it was operating.
3. Compacting and baling machines have uses in many industries, and also are involved in a number of fatalities and serious injuries. Often, lack of proper lockout/tagout procedures is to blame. Many workers have been killed while attempting to clear a jam from an operating compactor, or inadvertently activating equipment that was not properly de-energized.
4. Workers can be crushed by the ram motion if guarding is missing or bypassed, or if lockout procedures are not followed during maintenance activities. Older compacting equipment may not have appropriate interlock guarding or may not have enough guarding to enclose the chamber or point-ofoperation area completely.
5. Severe injury and death can also occur during service or maintenance tasks on or inside an energized or jammed machine if the machine cycles automatically, or if the machine is activated by another worker who is unaware that someone is inside the chamber.
6. In addition to the hazardous-energy potential, working inside these machines may also present confined-space hazards such as hazardous atmospheres and engulfment.

STATS

Balers and compactors were responsible for the follow deaths:

- 9 of the deaths happened because the workers failed to follow proper safety precautions regarding power shutdown and pressure dissipation.
- 6 deaths happened because the workers failed to follow the safety procedures while clearing jammed material.
- 6 deaths happened because the workers failed to shut down the automatic controls while clearing jammed material.
- 5 deaths happened because the workers tried to bypass the safety locking mechanism or because the locks were defective.
- 3 deaths happened because the operator activated the machine without realizing that their co-workers were nearby.