Street Sweeper Caught in Machine

The hopper lowered and the victim became pinned between the top of the suction hose and the side of the hopper.

The levers for dumping the hopper are recessed slightly beneath the collection hopper and are also directly under a steel safety plate designed to prevent them from being inadvertently activated. A warning sign on top of the plate read: “No step.”

It is believed that the victim placed his right foot on the safety plate and his foot subsequently slipped off the plate and struck a lever, which caused the hopper to lower and pin him.

Recommendations:

- Workers should use all safety devices to prevent injury and exposure to hazards. The sweeper was equipped with a hopper safety bar that prevents the hopper from lowering from its operational position. It wasn’t used.
- Equipment manufacturers should incorporate passive safety devices and systems in the design of machines to protect workers from unexpected movement of components.
- Warning sign or not, the steel plate was positioned such that it might tempt workers to stand on it to access the top of the suction hose.