Worker Trapped in Feather Dryer

A poultry worker was fatally wounded when a co-worker inadvertently started the feather dryer tank he was cleaning.

The incident occurred at a poultry ranch where birds are grown for food. The worker had been inside the feather dryer for about 30 minutes when a co-worker accidentally started the motor that drives the metal paddles. The paddles struck the employee several times before he was pinned between the paddles and the wall. It took more than 35 minutes to rescue the man and he died as a result of massive trauma to his head, chest and abdomen.

An investigation showed the employer did not have a lockout program in place, although the machine was cleaned weekly. There were no caution signs to warn employees of the danger associated with entering the dryer and no interlocking mechanism to prevent the motor from starting during maintenance.

Take part in safety training offered by your employer and protect yourself and co-workers by ensuring machinery is de-energized, disengaged or blocked before maintenance or cleaning begin.