



Customer Focus on Loss Control

Innovative Safety and Health SolutionsSM

Sorting Municipal Solid Waste with Front End Loaders

The use of front end loaders in municipal solid waste (MSW) sorting areas has become more popular in recent years. This can be a dangerous situation, as people and the loaders are working in the same area. A moment of inattentiveness on the part of the loader operator or one of the sorters can have serious or fatal results, if a person is struck by the loader.

Consider implementing these mechanical and procedural controls to minimize this hazard:

Mechanical Controls on the Loader

Ensure that each loader has:

- A functional, audible back up alarm (per OSHA).
- A warning flasher or rotating beacon that operates when equipment is moving.
- Mirrors for rear visibility.
- Convex mirrors for viewing close to the rear.
- Clean, clear glass; ensure that glass is free from cracks and distortion

Procedural Controls

- Assign the same number of people to work on the floor from day to day, so that everyone knows what to expect.
- Require any newly assigned or removed persons to check in with the loader operator.
- Require that people only work together, never alone.
- Ensure that the loader works one area while people work in another area, then swap.
- Ensure that the loader operator keeps people in sight when the loader is moving.
- Require that all people on the floor (including the loader operator) are trained in these controls.

Exercise caution when mechanical controls, such as beepers for proximity warning, are used. People become dependent on these controls for warnings, allow their senses to relax, and fail to use appropriate cautions when working near the machines. This would be especially dangerous if a warning unit should fail to function, and nearby workers do not regularly use other means to keep themselves out of harm's way. The obvious, best means of defense is to keep the people and the machines separated by distance.

FRONT END LOADERS

