

Case 254. 52-year-old recycling crew member died from injuries sustained when she was struck and run over by a Caterpillar fork truck transporting a six-yard metal waste container obstructing the fork truck operator's view as the forklift was traveling forward.

A 52-year-old female recycling crew member died from injuries sustained when she was struck and run over by a Caterpillar fork truck transporting a six-yard metal waste container obstructing the fork truck operator's view as the forklift was traveling forward. The decedent, who had mental disabilities, worked for a non-profit community organization as a member of a four-person work crew with a job coach that picked up and loaded clean cardboard into a tow-behind recycling container and then unloaded this cardboard at a recycling center. The incident occurred after the work crew ate lunch in the breakroom at the recycling center. The decedent had to use the restroom and was assisted by a coworker. The job coach and the rest of the work crew proceeded to the designated area with the tow-behind trailer and began to unload the trailer. The decedent and her coworker were walking to the unloading site when the incident occurred. The operator of the forklift was employed by the recycling center. The Caterpillar Model GC30K forklift was transporting a metal trash container, measuring 58 inches tall and 66 inches wide from inside the recycling center building to a trash pickup area outside of the building. The container was filled to overflowing. The forklift operator, with the load raised four to five inches above the ground was traveling with the load forward when he struck and ran over the decedent. Her job coach was notified by the coworker she was walking with that the decedent was hurt. The job coach ran to the location and initiated first aid measures. Emergency response was called and the decedent was transported by helicopter to a hospital where she died.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division did not issue a violation citation to the decedent's employer.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued a Serious citation to the recycling center:

SERIOUS: Powered Industrial Trucks, Part 21, Rule 2185

A powered industrial truck was driven when the operator could not look in the direction of and/or keep a clear view of the direction of travel.