

Case 309. 27-year-old Hispanic manager at a recycling facility fell into the upper level shredder hopper and was killed by the rotating blades and knives.

A 27-year-old Hispanic male manager at a recycling facility fell into the upper level shredder hopper and was killed by the rotating blades and knives. The decedent was discovered missing shortly after lunch following a meeting where the company operations manager told all the employees that the decedent was in charge of assigning job status. The decedent and another line operator had a verbal altercation the previous day. Approximately 30 minutes after the employee meeting, the decedent was missing and his forklift was parked at the location where the line operator with whom he had previously argued worked. The search of the area revealed that the decedent somehow fell into the upper level shredder hopper and was killed by the rotating blades and knives. When the responding police arrived, other employees stated they felt that the decedent's death was not an accident. The responding police decided that the death will be initially treated as a possible crime scene and all employees were detained for questioning. No witnesses observed the decedent walking up the conveyor to the feed hopper or was he observed going up to the operator platform.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued a Health and Safety Recommendation at the conclusion of its investigation:

An inspection/investigation of your worksite revealed the following condition(s) which may constitute a safety or health hazard to your employee(s):

- Develop and implement a company policy that identifies and addresses ways to prevent and/or respond to issues of potential violent behaviors and/or acts of violence in the work place.