

Laundry Worker Dies Entangled with Rotating drum



Hospital workers are certainly not unaccustomed to death, but when a fellow worker dies in an incident there, shock waves reverberate throughout the facility.

Of course, a healthcare workplace isn't really any different from any other settings. Workers can trip, fall, be exposed to deadly chemicals or moving machinery. The food service, office, maintenance and medical areas all have worker hazards.

So does the laundry facility, as illustrated by this fatality investigation report:

A 28-year-old man who was loading sheets in to a large industrial washing machine died after being pulled into a rotating drum. The worker and his supervisor had previously loaded a sling of sheets into the machine, as that task was designed to be carried out by two workers.

However, when the supervisor was called away, the worker made the mistake of attempting to load a second sling himself.

Hearing a yell, the supervisor and other workers responded. They discovered the worker motionless inside the machine. He died of multiple blunt force injuries before paramedics arrived.

It was determined that the worker had activated a "basket" button on the side of the machine. That button, when pressed and released, causes the drum to tumble three times to assist in the laundry loading process. When the drum rotated, he became entangled in the sheets and was pulled inside the machine.

This fatality carries the important message that no worker should ever attempt to undertake a task that is known to require two or more people. It's not worth the risk.