Operator Killed While Repairing Running Machine



Operator Killed While Repairing Running Machine

A 61-year-old woodworker was killed as he was trying to replace a glue tray in a glue-press machine while it was still operating. The glue tray had been removed to repair a drip. The woodworker took the repaired tray, and with a new co-worker attempted to reattach it. At the same time, he instructed another employee to continue processing a product that was already in the press machine. When the victim could not see where to reattach the tray, he stuck his head inside of the machine, between the frame and the closed top lid of the press. Suddenly, the top lid lifted at the end of a programmed automatic cycle, crushing the man’s head against the frame. He was pronounced dead at the hospital.

Employees need to completely lock and tag out equipment before performing any maintenance. Along with this, companies must develop and implement a comprehensive lockout/tagout program. All pinchpoints and moving parts need to be fully guarded. Employers should routinely conduct hazard surveys and follow up with corrective action. Work procedures should be reviewed and changed if needed to prevent future incidents. Finally, only qualified personnel should have performed the work.

Source: Oregon Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Case Report 05OR005