Temporary Worker Caught in Tread Scrap Machine Dies



A 49-year-old man, employed by a temp agency to work in a tire manufacturing plant, was pulled into a tread scrap machine and killed. The worker was feeding the scrap tire tread into the tread spool. Typically, this was done by feeding the tread into a take-up spool by applying pressure with the right hand and pressing a jog button that rotated the spool with the left hand. This worker did not use the jog button. Instead, he used an automatic mode, which meant the take-up spool operated continuously. The worker got his hand caught between the tire liner and the take-up spool as he was feeding the tire tread into the machine. He got pulled into the machine. The emergency stop button was close to his left hand, but did not appear to have been activated. He was found wedged in the take-up spool with the liner around him.

Machines should have proper guards and engineering controls to protect workers from hazards, such as being pulled into the machine. An automatic shutoff would have achieved this. Another lesson learned is that employers can help reduce or prevent incidents by conducting random inspections and observing how employees operate equipment. In addition, written machine-specific safe operating procedures will go a long way in helping to reduce injuries. Finally, temporary staffing agencies should work closely with employers to develop training programs, job descriptions and hazard analyses for their workers.

Source: Oklahoma Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Case Report 05OK024