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30 **Laborer crushed by falling paper bales.**

Authors Anonymous

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Link <http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/publications/3>

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Abstract A 58-year-old laborer died after a stack of baled paper collapsed on him. The victim was one of eight employees at a waste management company and had worked at the company for two months at the time of the incident. The company had no written injury and illness prevention program and no regular safety meetings, and it provided no safety training to employees. The incident took place at a warehouse that stored bales of recycled paper for transport by rail. Each bale weighed approximately 1,000 pounds, and bales often were stacked six high - to a height of 20 feet. Employees stacked the bales with a **forklift** according to direction of management, but the company had no safe stacking plan. The victim was sweeping the floor near a stack of baled paper when, without warning, the stack collapsed on him. One employee ran for help while others ran to assist the victim by removing the bales with a **forklift**. Emergency services arrived within minutes, but the victim was declared dead at the scene. The death certificate listed crush injury to the torso as the cause of death. TO PREVENT FUTURE OCCURRENCES: 1. Ensure bales are stacked safely. Stored material should be limited in height, and piled or stacked in a manner to prevent tipping, collapsing, rolling and spreading. In this case, the uneven bales of recycled paper stacked upon one another created a collapse hazard. They had been stacked for more than 60 weeks, allowing materials to become even less stable. 2. Establish and maintain an IIPP in a language employees can understand. An injury and illness prevention program is the most effective method for ensuring employees receive the safety information required for them to do their jobs. In this case, the employer had none. An effective IIPP should include: A. The name of the person responsible for implementing the IIPP; B. A system for ensuring employees comply with safe work practices; C. A system for clearly communicating safety and health matters to employees, and provisions to encourage employees to report hazards without fear of retaliation. 3. Establish a training and testing program to verify employees' skills. A documented training and testing program will help verify that employees receive and comprehend all relevant safety information. Training and testing should be required: A. For all new employees; B. For employees given new job assignments; C. Whenever an employer is made aware of a new or previously unrecognized hazard.

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