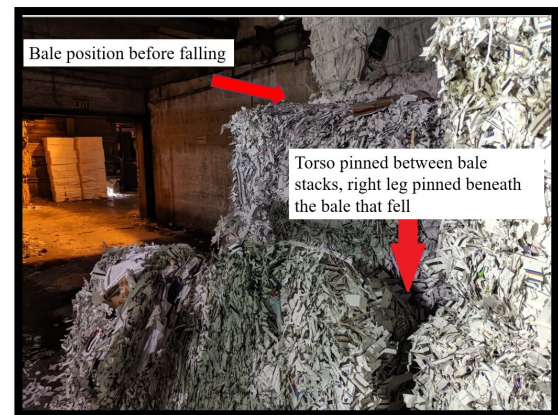
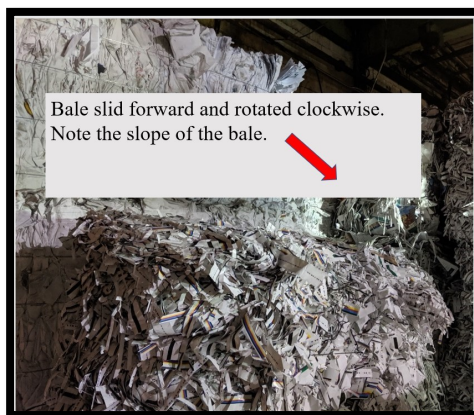




Fatal Accident with Paper Bale Staging and Storing

A paperworker was fatally injured when a bale of recycled paper weighing approximately 1200lbs fell on him. Unfortunately, the USW has experienced many incidents with employers and falling bales in different industries while in storage and production areas. The victim had been assisting in de-wiring recycled fiber bales by cutting and pulling the baling wires from a bale. The victim was assigned to the area because he was on restrictive duty. Having a member assist in de-wiring was an out-of-process event. Typically there is one member in the area who is both staging the bales in the production area using a forklift and de-wiring them. The bales are stored in a different area of the mill and staged in the pulper room. After de-wiring a bale the member stepped back to remove himself from the path of the forklift. The bales, stacked three high, were directly behind him. The top bale fell from the stack and pinned him between the fallen bale and an adjacent stack of fiber. During the storing process, the bales had been exposed to moisture from leaks in the roof. Although it could not be determined if the exposure to moisture from the roof was a contributing factor, loosely baled product did contribute to the incident. He suffered a broken leg, sternum, ribs, and back along with a punctured lung and bruised heart; these injuries proved to be fatal.



Recommendations:

- Eliminate stacking. Where stacking cannot be eliminated, limit the height the bales are stacked.
- Loosely or poorly baled materials should not be stacked. Store material in tiers stacked, blocked, interlocked or limited in height so that it is stable and secure against sliding and collapse.
- Develop a system and/or process to secure bails and guard workers from falling bales.
- Conduct Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) to identify hazards and controls for the hazards within storage areas and practices.
- Conduct regular inspections and maintenance of roof and storage areas.
- Workplaces needs to be designed and constructed for adequate working space.
- Refrain from placing workers, including those working with restrictions, in positions that do not have standard operating procedures or JHA's .
- Practice good housekeeping and cleaning.
- Develop a system and/or process that ensures the separation of mobile and equipment and foot traffic.
- Explore other bale handling alternatives and process changes for the staging of bales, storage rooms and production areas with workers and their representatives' participation.



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This hazard alert is based on an actual incident, and reflects our best understanding of the incident at the time it was written. However, many incidents have multiple causes; this alert may not cover all of them. The purpose of the alert is to illustrate workplace hazards; it is not intended to be a comprehensive report on the incident.