

Bowling Alley Worker Dies after Sweatshirt Gets Entangled in Pinsetter



One of the most common safety hazards posed by machinery and equipment in the workplace is the risk that workers' clothing can get entangled, resulting in serious injuries and even fatalities.

For example, in Ohio, a 53-year-old bowling alley worker was asphyxiated when his hooded sweatshirt was caught in a pinsetter because the machine's moving parts were improperly exposed. The incident happened when the worker was retrieving a bowling ball.

There are two lessons to be learned from this tragedy.

First, it's critical that you ensure that hazardous areas on machinery and equipment are properly guarded with appropriate guards. And make sure that workers understand that they shouldn't remove these guards.

Second, you should set safety rules on clothing in the workplace to minimize the risk that sleeves, hoods, shirt tails, etc. get entangled in equipment. For example, require workers to:

- Wear close-fitting clothing
- Tuck their shirts into their pants
- Wear short sleeves. If workers must wear a long-sleeved shirt for health and safety reasons, they should button the cuffs.

Clothing isn't the only thing that can get entangled. Hair can also get caught. So require workers to wear long hair in a bun, tied back or covered with a hat or hairnet. And instruct them to keep facial hair short, too.

And even PPE, such as gloves, can pose an entanglement risk. So workers shouldn't wear gloves when working near rotating shafts or other moving machine parts. And if they must wear gloves for health and safety, the gloves should be suitable for the task and not endanger workers.

Lastly, bar workers from wearing jewellery in the workplace, such as bracelets and necklaces, that can get caught in machinery.