

# Hops Baler Hazards

October 2024

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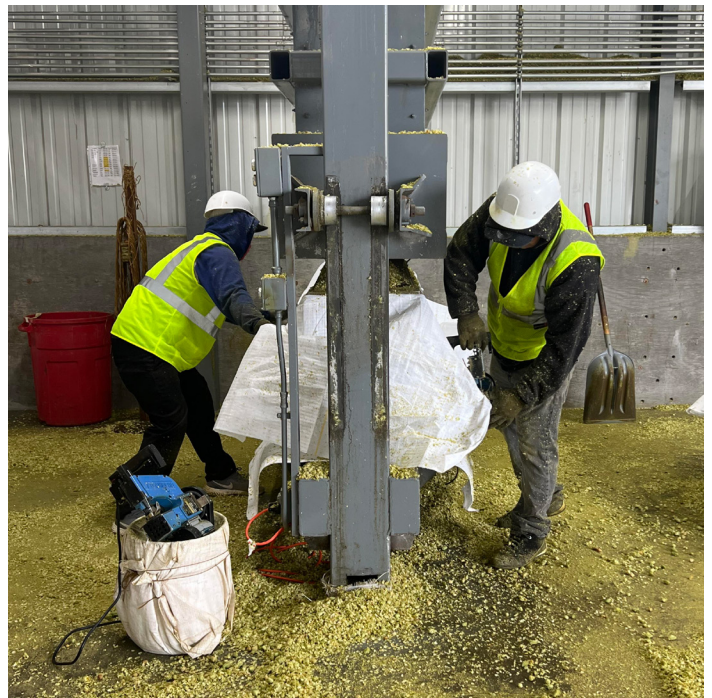
L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) conducted two separate hospitalization inspections in 2023. During both inspections, workers reached into the press to adjust the bale sack while the baler press was activated resulting in crushing injuries to the workers.

Injury data have identified other hazards in hop baler operations, including falls, respiratory hazards, and moving/rotating parts. These hazards have resulted in:

- Amputations;
- Respiratory diseases including asthma;
- Severe cuts and lacerations;
- Slips, trips, and falls; and
- Sprains and strains.

Injuries like these can be prevented:

- Provide workers with instruction and training in safe work methods before assigning them to operate, clean, service, maintain, or repair the equipment.
- Do not use additional people to defeat the guard or safety system at the point of operation.
- Enforce operation requirements, including potential disciplinary actions if not followed.



- Require workers to stay clear of the point of operation before starting up the machine or beginning a compaction cycle.
- Inspect the hops baler machine's safety interlocks, switches, and other protective devices to ensure they are not disabled or bypassed.
- Ensure hops balers are not operated unless protective devices are fully functional and workers stay clear when energy is going to the machine.



In addition, employers must identify and address all work-related hazards as part of their written Accident Prevention Program (APP): [Lni.wa.gov/AccidentPrevention](https://lni.wa.gov/AccidentPrevention).

A job hazard or safety analysis can help you identify hazards effectively and efficiently. L&I provides consultations, training, and technical assistance at no cost to employers. Get more information at [Lni.wa.gov/Consultation](https://lni.wa.gov/Consultation).

### **More information:**

[Lni.wa.gov/safety-health](https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health)

### **Prevention Deaths and Injuries While Compacting or Baling Refuse Material (CDC)**

[cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2003-124/pdfs/2003-124.pdf](https://cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2003-124/pdfs/2003-124.pdf)

### **Contact L&I**

Email [EyeOnSafety@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:EyeOnSafety@Lni.wa.gov) or call 1-800-423-7233.

*This alert is intended to bring awareness to potential safety and health hazards in the workplace. It is not a rule and creates no new legal obligations. L&I recommends employers and workers review the safety and health rules for specific requirements at [Lni.wa.gov/SafetyRules](https://lni.wa.gov/SafetyRules).*

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