

Cleaner trapped by discharge gate of refuse handling equipment

On 16 October 2021, a cleaner was clearing the discharge outlet of a refuse handling equipment, when the discharge gate lowered onto him. The cleaner was pronounced dead at the scene.

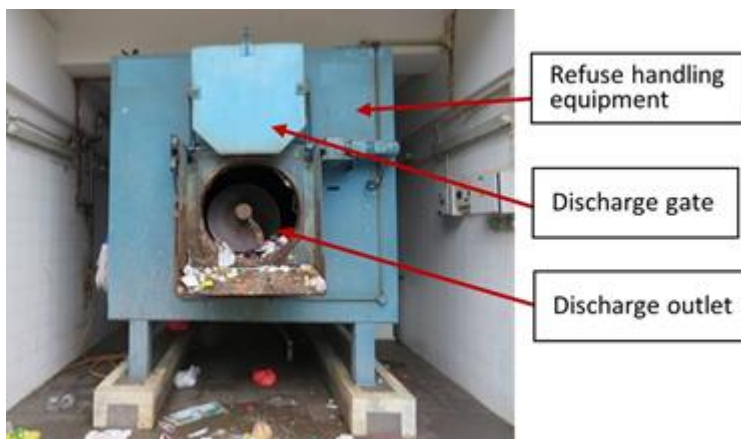


Figure 1: Discharge gate in OPEN position.

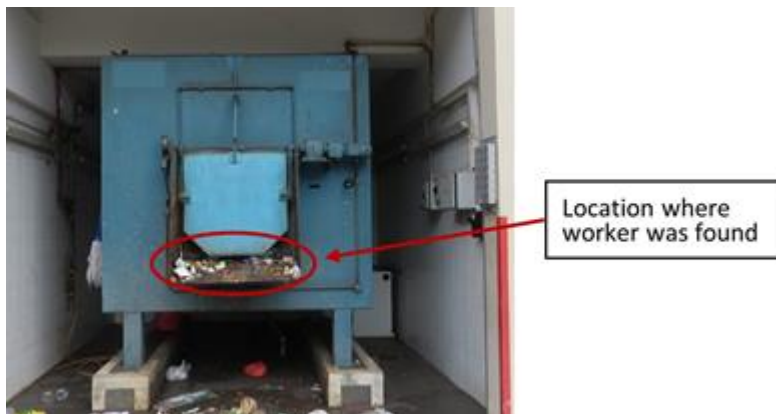


Figure 2: Discharge gate in CLOSED position.

Recommendations

Refuse handling equipment discharge gates should only be opened to transfer trash to refuse collection trucks. Using refuse handling equipment can be hazardous if it is not operated as intended. To prevent accidents, consider implementing the following measures:

- **Worker Training:** Allow only trained and authorised persons to operate the refuse handling equipment – they should be refuse collection truck drivers and crew

only. Machine operators must be familiar with the safe work procedures and the risk controls implemented. Cleaners should be instructed not to operate the machine.

- **Controlled Access:** Prevent unauthorised use of the machine by limiting access to the machine control panel. This could be done, for example, with a lock and key.
- **Hazard Alarms:** Equip the machine with audible and visual alarms to alert workers that the discharge gate is closing.

* Information on the accident is based on preliminary investigations by the Ministry of Manpower as at 21 October 2021. This may be subject to change as investigations are still on-going. Please also note that the recommendations provided here are not exhaustive and they are meant to enhance workplace safety and health so that a recurrence may be prevented. The information and recommendations provided are not to be construed as implying liability on any party nor should it be taken to encapsulate all the responsibilities and obligations under the law.

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