

## How To Keep Employees Safe - Baling Presses In Recycling Applications Pt. 2

This is the second insight document focusing employee safety in recycling applications with a focus on vertical baling presses. Vertical balers are those that tend to be the equipment more commonly found in smaller scale applications such as supermarkets and retail stores.

As discussed in the part 1, EN 16252 – Machines for compacting waste materials or recyclable fractions – Horizontal baling presses – Safety requirements & EN 16500 – Machines for compacting waste materials or recyclable fractions – Vertical baling presses – Safety requirements are relevant standards for any manufacturers or owners of recycling equipment.

This document aims to highlight the safeguarding sections that offer practical advice to any engineer designing or commissioning equipment. The main risks to employee safety revolve around reaching into and accessing the baling or compacting chamber to clear out material or blockages.

With the applications of vertical baling equipment being focused around smaller scale applications, the experience and training level of operators tends to be more varied. This would appear to have been in the conscious of the safety experts contributing to the standard during the development process as focus on certain safeguards appear.

When operating the baling press, sensitive protective equipment or two hand control devices are listed as safeguarding methods.

Sensitive protective equipment can include optical equipment such as light curtains but also safety pressure mats. The considerations to be made here are around the possibility of material and debris in the environment to foul the optical element of safeguards or be placed upon the pressure sensitive equipment.

Alongside fixed guarding to try and eliminate all risk of moving equipment, movable interlocking guards appear. These shall be designed and positioned so that the opening of any individual guard stops the movement of any dangerous part of machinery before any part of a person enters the danger zone.

If the stopping time to achieve this is not feasible or the approach speeds of the human body cannot be mitigated against, then guards shall be an interlocking guard with guard locking.

Furthermore, after a move-able interlocking guard has been opened the starting of the compression process cycle shall require a manual reset and actuation of a start control at the control station.

Fortress is more than happy to lean on its 40 years of application experience to consult with machine designers early in any system's specification. It's important for the protection of people and the protection of productivity that all aspects of safeguarding functionality are considered before product's are selected. The contact section of the [fortressinterlocks.com](http://fortressinterlocks.com) website can put you in touch with the relevant distributor.

