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For Immediate Release  
June 22, 2006

## **UNIVERSAL HANDLING EQUIPMENT COMPANY LIMITED FINED \$87,500 FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY VIOLATION**

HAMILTON, Ont. – Universal Handling Equipment Company Limited, a Hamilton, Ont.-based company that fabricates garbage truck bodies for the waste disposal industry, was fined \$87,500 on June 16, 2006 for a violation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act that resulted in serious injuries to an employee.

On October 1, 2004, an electrician was inside the waste storage area of a truck making final adjustments to a hydraulic pressure switch that controlled a “ram” (a metal bar used to compact garbage) when the electrician realized the ram was closing in. A second worker, who was at a control panel in the truck’s cab, activated the manual reverse direction switch to move the ram while the electrician attempted to quickly exit out of the compactor. However, the electrician was unable to get out all of the way and suffered injuries that included a crushed pelvis and serious nerve damage to the left leg. The incident occurred at the company’s plant at 100 Burland Crescent in Hamilton.

A Ministry of Labour investigation found the second worker failed to activate an emergency stop button to stop the ram’s movement. The design of the truck involved in the incident was relatively new and placed the electrician in a hazardous position to make final adjustments. Older models had the adjustment valves located outside of the truck body and did not require a worker to enter the body to make final adjustments. The need for lockout or some other form of protection for the electrician should have been considered, including a lockout procedure or a different pressure-setting procedure or both.

Universal Handling Equipment Company Limited pleaded guilty, as an employer, to failing to ensure control switches or other control mechanisms were locked out on the compactor, as required by Section 76 of the Regulations for Industrial Establishments. This was contrary to Section 25(1)(c) of the act.

The fine was imposed by Justice of the Peace Carolyn Woron of the Ontario Court of Justice in Hamilton. In addition, the court imposed a 25-per-cent victim fine surcharge, as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

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Court Information at a Glance

**Location:** Ontario Court of Justice  
45 Main Street East, Courtroom 320  
Hamilton, Ontario

**Judge:** Justice of the Peace Carolyn Woron

**Date / Time:** June 16, 2006, 9 a.m.

**Defendant:** Universal Handling Equipment Company Limited

**Matter:** Occupational Health & Safety

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