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OSHA Regional News Brief – Region 4

U.S. Department of Labor

January 5, 2017

**Atlanta-based paper, plastic recycler exposes workers to fire, explosion,
machine guarding hazards; OSHA proposes \$133K in penalties
*Employer cited for 21 serious safety, health violations***

Employer name: Nemo Plastics Inc.

Inspection site: 1425 Candler Road
Gainesville, Georgia 30507

Citations issued: The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration issued citations to Nemo Plastics for 21 serious and three other-than-serious safety and health violations. The inspection was initiated after the agency received a complaint.

Investigation findings: OSHA issued the serious citations for:

- Exposing workers to explosion and fire hazards by allowing combustible dust to accumulate.
- Failure to provide employees personal protective clothing.
- Failure to implement a hazardous energy control program to prevent machinery from starting up during maintenance and servicing.
- Failure to evaluate spaces such as silos to determine if they were permit-required confined spaces.
- Exposing workers to amputations hazards due to missing machine guards.
- Failure to develop a noise monitoring program.

The other-than-serious violations include exposing workers to electrical hazards, not providing Appendix D for employees using respirators and failing to post combustible dust warning signs to inform employees of the fire and explosive hazards associated with combustible dust.

Proposed penalties: \$133,443

Quote: "Nemo Plastics is responsible to assess workplace hazards and ensure measures are taken to protect employees," said William Fulcher, OSHA's area director in the Atlanta-East Office. "Workers should not have to risk their lives or health to provide for themselves and their families. The hazards identified during this complaint inspection are preventable by taking basic safety precautions such as providing personal protective equipment, performing routine housekeeping and guarding machines so that a worker doesn't get injured or killed."

The citations can be viewed at:

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/default/files/newsroom/newsreleases/OSHA20162382a.pdf>

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/default/files/newsroom/newsreleases/OSHA20162382b.pdf>

Based in Atlanta, Nemo Plastics receives waste cardboard and plastics to recycle the material for shipment to further processing companies to be reused. The employer has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and proposed penalties to comply, request a conference with OSHA's area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

To ask questions; obtain compliance assistance; file a complaint; or report amputations, eye loss, workplace hospitalizations, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, the public should call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-OSHA (6742) or the agency's Atlanta-East Area Office at 770-493-6644.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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