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Sanitation driver killed at Riverdale Home Depot

RIVERDALE - A truck driver for a sanitation company was killed Thursday morning at the Home Depot on Route 23 when he became pinned between a trash container and the wall, police said.

Michael Rea Jr., 48, of Beechwood in Ocean County was apparently connecting the outdoor container to an indoor trash compactor when the compactor switched on, police said; the container shifted, trapping Rea against the cinderblock wall.

Police received a call at 6:10 a.m. requesting an ambulance. When Patrolman Thomas Antonucci arrived, he found Rea still pinned against the wall near the loading dock behind the building. Rea was unconscious, police said.

Antonucci, Patrolman Pat Harden, and Sgt. Glen Danzo administered oxygen to Rea while they attempted to free him, but were unsuccessful.

Firefighters moved the trash container with air bags.

A state police helicopter was dispatched and the Pompton Lakes-Riverdale First Aid Squad attempted to revive Rea. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Rea worked for Allegro Sanitation Corp. of Secaucus. A representative of the company was unavailable for comment.

The death remains under investigation by Riverdale police, the Morris County Prosecutor's Office, and the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration.