



LEAF COLLECTION OPERATIONS – CRUSH ZONES

Much has been written and said about the hazard of falling under the tires of leaf collection vehicles. In 1997 a New Jersey DPW worker was killed when he was run over by the rear wheels of a dump truck pulling a leaf vac trailer, and in 2003 a worker was killed in New Jersey when he fell from the hitch of a leaf vacuum trailer. Both of these incidents involve workers entering one of the Crush Zones common to collecting leaves. This lesson will discuss several crush zone hazards of leaf collection and their control measures.



Stay Clear of Vehicles' Tires

The tires of a trailer and a truck are an obvious hazard. Yet as mentioned above, recently, two NJ DPW workers have been killed by falling under the tires. Workers and drivers must coordinate their efforts.

Drivers –

- Keep the vehicle towards the middle of the street so that the boom is extended perpendicular from the vehicle. This puts the hose operator farthest from the tires.
- Be especially aware when turning to the right.

Crew members –

- Never position yourself between truck & trailer.



Stay Clear of Moving Vehicles, Especially When Backing

Leaf collecting is often a multiple-vehicle operation. Many vehicles are large and have significant blind spots.

Drivers –

- Before leaving, make sure all warning alarms are working and mirrors are adjusted.
- Stop whenever any worker's position is not visible.
- Stay alert - do not get distracted by cell phones, etc.

Crew Members –

- Wear hi-visibility clothing and stay within the driver's eyesight.
- Do not walk between vehicles or under raised loads.



Hazards when Unloading

Do not let your guard down at the unloading sight. There are several crush hazards here also.

- The raised container, like a raised dump body, is a danger zone. Operators must stay clear and prohibit entry by others.
- Multiple moving, backing, and maneuvering in tight quarters in difficult conditions create unfamiliar hazards for workers on foot and drivers. Extra care must be taken when out of vehicles.