



SHIFT BRIEFING



SANITATION - CRUSH ZONES BEST PRACTICES

Much has been written and said about the hazard of falling under the tires of refuse collection vehicles. In 2005 a New Jersey worker was killed when he was run over by the rear wheels of a side-loading recycling vehicle. The Bureau of Labor Statistics rates solid waste collection as America's 5th most hazardous job. Many incidents involve workers entering one of several Crush Zones common to sanitation operations. This lesson will discuss several crush zone hazards of collecting solid waste and their control measures.

Stay Clear of the Vehicle Tires

NIOSH reports that between 1980 and 1992, 110 sanitation workers fell beneath the vehicle's wheels and were killed. Workers and drivers must be vigilant to this ever-present hazard.

Drivers

- Before leaving, ensure the backup alarm is working & mirrors are adjusted.
- Keep collectors in view at all times. Immediately stop if they are not visible in mirrors or direct line-of-sight.
- Remain alert for obstacles such as poles, parked cars, etc.
- Do not become distracted by cell phones, food, etc.

Crew Members

- Always ride on designated areas (behind the rear tires). Ride facing forward and alert to obstacles.
- Never ride on the rear step when the vehicle is backing. One collector should act as a spotter to guide the vehicle back.
- Never walk behind a backing vehicle.
- Be visible. ANSI Class 2 high visibility apparel is the national standard.
- Stay visible. Both collectors must remain in the side mirrors and sight of the driver.
- Be alert to approaching cars when getting off the rear step.

Stay Clear of Compactor & Dumpsters

NJ PEOSH publications prohibit workers from being behind the truck during the compaction cycle.

- Never hold trash in with hands or cans. Besides crush injuries, compacted garbage can shoot from the hopper.
- Ensure locks are engaged before lifting dumpsters. Remain alert for unexpected movements.

Hazards at Landfills or Transfer Stations

Do not let your guard down at the unloading site. There are several potential crush hazards at landfills and transfer stations.

- Raised lift gate and container are crush zones. Operators must stay clear and prohibit entry by others.
- Multiple vehicles 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 here. Continue to wear high-visibility apparel. Minimize time out of the truck.