



SANITATION - RIDING THE BACK STEP OF SANITATION TRUCKS BEST PRACTICES

There are nearly 180,000 refuse trucks on the road in North America today. According to BLS, solid waste collection continues to have the 5th highest fatality rate in the United States. The number of U.S. solid waste employee fatalities averages about 60 annually, with an average of nearly one fatality each week in the United States. The need for vigilance and continuous improvement is paramount.



The ANSI standard address the design and construction of the vehicle concerning rider and pedestrian safety by recommending the following: Riding steps should provide a self-cleaning, slip-resistant surface that is at least 220 square inches and capable of supporting 500 pounds. The steps should be at least 8 inches deep, mounted behind the rearmost axle of the vehicle, and not more than 24 inches above the road surface.

Grab handles capable of withstanding a 500-pound pull should be provided along with the riding steps. You must ride holding on with both hands and facing the vehicle. **DO NOT LEAN OUT** away from the vehicle.

Warning signs should be posted above the riding steps to prohibit their use when traveling at speeds above 10 miles per hour or when backing. These warning signs also remind riders of the need to ride in a cab if the distance between stops is greater than 0.2 miles or the anticipated travel speed exceeds guidelines.

Another very important concept to remember is proper mounting and dismounting of the rear step. Wait for the vehicle to come to a complete stop before stepping off the back. Never jump off the step. Likewise, do not run and jump onto the back of a moving truck.

On a typical trash pickup route, you have hundreds of opportunities to slip and fall while getting on or off of the rear step. You need to consistently use the three-points of contact rule-of-thumb. This means both feet and one hand or one foot and both hands. Grasp the handhold before stepping off the pavement, and only when the vehicle is completely stopped. Reverse the process when alighting, look down to see the place where your foot will land, and while holding on with both hands, step down to the ground. Make sure of your footing before you let go of the handholds.

Regular visible inspections of the step, handholds, and your gloves and shoes for foreign substances that may make for slippery conditions are important to ensure your safety.