

# FACE THE FACTS

## HAZ ALERT



### DRIVERS AND RIDERS NEED TO WORK SAFELY WHILE IN AND AROUND REFUSE COLLECTION VEHICLES

#### To prevent refuse collection injuries:

- **Employers should provide comprehensive employee safety training programs including identification of hazards posed by other motor vehicles in the area, and by riding on or working near moving refuse collection vehicles.**
- **Employers and employees should have routine maintenance programs for refuse collection vehicles including proper condition of tires.**
- **Don't place yourself in a potentially hazardous situation. Workers should always stay alert.**

Last year, 1 refuse collector died while working. During the first 6 months this year, 4 workers suffered fatal traumatic injuries while working in or near a refuse collection vehicle in Kentucky.

The first case this year involved a worker who fell when he exited the cab of the refuse collection vehicle while the truck was moving forward uphill to enter a landfill.

He stepped onto a step on the side-mounted fuel tank to reach the ground while the truck was slowly moving and his foot slipped. He slid under the truck and was run over.

A second case involved a county jail inmate on work release who was killed on a sanitation truck when a car slammed into the back of the sanitation truck on a 2-lane state highway. The incident happened at 7 am on a bright day and the driver of the car may have been blinded by the sun.

The third incident involved a refuse collection truck parked at the curb. Refuse collectors were loading trash in the truck when a passenger



vehicle approached behind the truck at approximately 35-40 mph and fatally hit one of the refuse collectors.

A fourth male was traveling on an interstate highway in an empty recycling truck. The front left tire deflated due to unknown reasons causing the driver to lose control of the vehicle. The seat-belted driver was in the far right lane. The truck swerved to the left across 2 lanes and the left shoulder, and struck a concrete divider. The truck straddled the concrete divider below the cab and the truck slid 100 feet breaking the wall. This caused the fuel tank to rupture and ignited the truck. The truck came to rest on its side with the cab on the south side of the interstate and the truck body on the north side. The driver and the cab were incinerated due to the heat of the resulting fire.

**BE AWARE OF HAZARDS SUCH AS OTHER MOTOR VEHICLES, AND IMPROPER VEHICLE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, WHEN WORKING ON OR IN REFUSE COLLECTION VEHICLES.**

## Employers Should Provide Comprehensive Employee Safety Training Programs Including Identification of Hazards Posed By Other Motor Vehicles In The Area, & By Riding On Or Working Near Moving Refuse Collection Vehicles.

Visual and audio inspections of truck tires, mirrors, lights, hydraulic hoses, and any audio alarms should be conducted prior to each day's use.

## Don't Place Yourself in a Potentially Hazardous Situation. Workers Should Always Stay Alert.

Safety training should include safe driving and riding, defensive driving techniques<sup>1</sup>, how to avoid inattentive and/or impatient drivers, and what to do in an emergency situation.

For safe driving<sup>2</sup>, drivers should: 1) check for a signal from rider before moving the vehicle 2) stop backing vehicle when visual contact is lost with rider and 3) resume backing only when visual contact with rider is made.

For safe riding, riders should: 1) ride inside the cab or on specifically designed riding steps 2) remain inside the cab or on a riding step until the vehicle is fully stopped and 3) should not use the riding step while the vehicle is backing, exceeding 10 mph, or traveling more than 0.2 miles<sup>3</sup>.

Riders and drivers should recognize potential hazardous areas around the refuse collection vehicle. Blind spots, tight spots and heavy traffic areas should be assessed every time the vehicle stops.

For safety protection, collectors should wear visible reflective clothing and slipresistant footwear to prevent falls.

### References:

1. URL: [http://www.ishn.com/CDA/Article\\_Information/ELearning\\_Item/0,3565,16933,00.html](http://www.ishn.com/CDA/Article_Information/ELearning_Item/0,3565,16933,00.html)
2. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Preventing Worker Injuries and Deaths From Moving Refuse Collection Vehicles (Pub. No. 97-110).
3. American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 1992, American National Standard for Mobile Refuse Collection and Compaction Equipment—safety requirements. New York, NY, [ANSI Z245.1-1992].

## Employers and Employees Should Have Routine Maintenance Programs For Refuse Collection Vehicles Including Proper Condition of Tires.

Procedures and intervals for preventive maintenance of vehicles should be established and reinforced on a regular basis.

For more information, contact:

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