NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Preventing Worker Injuries and Deaths From Moving Refuse Collection Vehicles

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

Public Employee Alert #13
Safety Bulletin
ATTENTION: All Public Employers
March 1, 2001

This notice is being sent as a result of the increase in accidents and fatalities involving refuse collection employees.

Please Ensure that this Warning and the Safe Practices below are Shared With All Operational Personnel

WARNING!

Workers risk possible injury or death when riding on or working near refuse collection vehicles.

Public employers should train their employees on the following:

1. **Observe safety procedures when backing up.**

Drivers should do the following:

- Stop backing immediately if visual contact is lost with workers on foot.
- Resume backing only when visual contact is restored with workers on foot.
- Use a co-worker as a spotter.
- Use agreed upon hand signals to communicate with the spotter.
- Insure the trucks back-up alarm is working.

Other crew members should do the following:

- Step off the riding steps before the driver begins to back-up.
- Never cross or step behind the vehicle when it is backing-up or when its backup lights are on.
- Remain inside the vehicle cab unless needed to act as a spotter.

Spotters should do the following:

- Remain visible in the driver's mirrors.
- Maintain a clear view of the hazard area (driver's blind spot) behind the vehicle.

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- Stay clear of the vehicle's path.
- Avoid walking backwards.
- Use agreed upon hand signals to communicate with the driver.
- Be sure that no one is on the riding steps or behind the vehicle before signaling the driver to start backing up.
- Immediately signal the driver to stop if any person or object enters the area behind the truck.
- Signal the driver to stop if the spotter must change positions when the vehicle is backing up.
- Be extremely observant of the driver's blind spot behind the vehicle.

Drivers should do the following:

- Wait for step riders to signal before putting the vehicle in motion.
- Avoid sudden starts and stops that could cause riders to be thrown from the steps.

2. Observe safe riding procedures.

Refuse collectors should do the following:

- Ride in the cab or a separate vehicle when not on the collection route.
- Use riding steps only when the vehicle is moving forward for short distances (0.2 miles or less) at slow speeds (10 miles per hour or less).
- After the vehicle has stopped, step, do not jump, on or off the riding steps.
- Wear slip resistant footwear.

Safe Work Practices
Save Lives

For Additional Information on Public Employee Safety and Health Contact:

Safety Issues, Recordkeeping and Discrimination Complaints
New Jersey Department of Labor
PEOSH Program
PO Box 386
Trenton, NJ 08625-0386
609-292-0767
800-624-1644

Protecting NJ Public Employees
DHSS
PEOSH

Health Issues
New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services
PEOSH Program
PO Box 360
Trenton, NJ 08625-0360
609-984-1863