



Ten Things You Should Do to Improve Worker Safety in 2013

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Solid Waste Safety Data

- Federal government recently reported waste/recycling collection workers have 4th highest fatality rate in the United States.
 - Increased by 30% in 2010 and 2011.
- Disproportionate number of worker fatalities occur at small employers in public and private sectors.
- Injury rate and median days away from work is significantly higher for public sector solid waste collection workers than in private sector.
- There have been at least 70 fatal accidents in which a third-party has been killed in 2012.

Bottom Line: Each week, there are 2-3 fatal accidents involving a solid waste employee or vehicle.

Improving Worker Safety in 2013

1. Engage Your Drivers and Other Front Line Workers
 - Majority of accidents/injuries are caused by unsafe behavior.
 - Make safety personal for your workers.
 - Figure out how to motivate workers to change their unsafe behaviors.
 - Get visual – use photos and video to reach employees.
 - Most front-line workers will respond better to visual than written safety communication.





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2. Review Your Safety Data

- What are your most common injuries/accidents?
- What are your most costly injuries/accidents?
- Do you have more accidents on certain days/times?
- Figure out the common causes and address them.
- Different municipalities have different fleets, routes, safety leadership, budget constraints, etc.



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3. Route Observation

Solid waste employers need to observe drivers and helpers on the route to make sure they are complying with applicable laws and working safely. Companies that do route observation on a regular basis see a substantial reduction in unsafe behaviors and accidents.

- PPE
- Seat Belts
- Backing (ANSI)
- Riding Steps (ANSI)
- Speed
- Turn Signals
- Cellphone/Texting
- LOTO

Improving Worker Safety in 2013

- 4. Use *Safety Monday* and Other Communication Tools
 - Communicate importance of safety frequently and consistently.
 - *Safety Monday* is NSWMA's weekly safety newsletter for solid waste employers.
 - Get creative with signs/posters.



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SAFETY MONDAY November 12, 2012

November & December = More Accidents?

A recent study by a company that sells safety-related equipment to the solid waste industry and others found that nearly 25 percent of the collisions involving waste collection vehicles occur in November and December. This is a disproportionate percentage of collisions.

Some potential causes include:

1. Inclement weather, including snow/ice in northern states
2. Increased traffic, particularly near shopping centers
3. Shorter days and longer nights

As the holiday season approaches, some motorists drive even worse than usual, as they rush from home to work to the mall. Motorists who try to multi-task and send a text or use a cell phone while driving pose a safety risk to others. Solid waste drivers and all employees in this industry are urged to drive smart – and avoid becoming a safety statistic – or the cause of a serious accident.



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5. Safety Belts

- In most states, drivers are required to wear a safety belt on route. Helpers should also use safety belt when in the cab.
- If truck overturns, it can save your driver's life!
- NYC Department of Sanitation – August 2011.



Improving Worker Safety in 2013

6. Distracted Driving Policy – Enforce It!

An increasing percentage of crashes involved distracted drivers. It is illegal for the driver of a commercial vehicle to text or use a handheld cell phone while driving the truck.

- Cell phone
- Texting
- Food and beverages

Do you have a written policy?

Are you enforcing it?

The screenshot shows a news article from OrovilleMR.com, dated Monday, November 26, 2012, 12:52:00 PM. The article is titled "Distracted driving no laughing matter" and is written by KATY SWEENEY, a staff writer. It was posted on 11/20/2012 at 09:54:13 PM PST. The article describes a "Media Distracted Driving Challenge" where reporters experienced the hazards of distracted driving. A quote from Officer Tracy Hoover states: "It takes 4.6 seconds to send the average text." Another quote says: "That means at 55 mph, you're driving across a football field blind." The article also mentions that officers set up dozens of cones 12 feet apart in a flat skid pan area of the raceway, creating a short track filled with tight turns to trip up reporters. The article includes a photo of a car's interior with a hand on the phone and a video player showing a car driving through a cone course. The website header includes "OrovilleMR.com", "OROVILLE MERCURY-REGISTER", and navigation links for Home, News, Sports, Opinion, Obits, Entertainment, and Multimedia. There is also a "today's DEALS" banner for Ford vehicles and a sidebar for "Carpet Ware & Interio Design Center".

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7. Focus on Backing and Rear End Collisions

- These are the two most common accidents for solid waste vehicles.
- Rushing is often a contributing factor.
- Is driver using mirror/camera while backing?





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8. Focus on Lifting and Slips/Trips/Falls

- The two most common injuries for solid waste workers.
- Lifting training.
- Consider limits on bag/container weights.
- Why are your workers falling?
 - Correct footwear
 - Adjusting for inclement weather
 - Rushing



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9. Rushing

- Are your workers rushing through their routes to finish early?
- Do you think this improves safety performance?
 - Examples of fatal consequences of rushing.
- Emphasize that the day is not over when route is completed.
- Overcoming obstacles to change.



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10. PPE – Last Line of Defense

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is often an employee's last line of defense to avoiding an injury. Because of the wide variety of hazards that solid waste workers face on a daily basis, PPE is essential to preventing injuries.

- Make sure workers are wearing high viz.
 - There are too many DPW and small hauler employees wearing dark shirts on routes.
- Shoes, gloves.
 - Use route observation to enforce PPE rules.



Improving Worker Safety in 2013

Bonus Tip: The ANSI Z245 Safety Standards

- The Waste Equipment Technology Association (WASTECH) has developed national consensus safety standards for waste equipment (trucks, containers, balers, compactors).
- The Z245 Standards provide a roadmap for worker safety if you follow them (e.g., riding step, lockout/tagout, confined space).
 - Z245.1 was updated in 2012 – Fall Protection.
- OSHA references Z245 Standards when issuing General Duty Clause citations.
 - Plaintiffs' lawyers use them in lawsuits.



Conclusions

1. Solid waste employees have high fatality and injury rates, and our trucks are involved in many fatal accidents.
2. Successful employers are engaging employees and getting them to change their unsafe behaviors.
3. NSWMA and WASTECC provide safety resources (videos, weekly safety newsletter, customized training) to help local governments improve their safety performance.



Solid Waste Safety – Resources

- EIA/NSWMA/WASTEC
 - Safety Monday
 - ANSI Standards
 - *Slow Down to Get Around*
 - *Be Safe Be Proud* Safety Videos
 - EIA Safety Manual (February 2013 update)
 - Driver of the Year Program
 - Concorde (drug/alcohol testing and DQ files)
- OSHA (www.osha.gov) and DOT (www.dot.gov)
- Insurance company/brokers
- Safety-oriented companies

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