



SWANA[®]

SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION
of North America

12 THINGS YOU SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE WORKER SAFETY

David Biderman, ED/CEO
240-494-2254
dbiderman@swana.org





Solid Waste Safety Data

- **Federal government recently confirmed waste/recycling collection workers have 5th highest fatality rate in U.S.**
 - Likely undercounts (temps, public sector)
 - Rate has increased since 2009 after 10 year decline
 - Each week, about one U.S. waste worker dies on the job
- **Disproportionate number of worker fatalities occur at small employers in the private sector (i.e., small haulers).**
- **There were at least 60 fatal accidents in which a third-party was killed in 2014.**

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

Solid Waste Safety Data

- **Injury/illness rate also increased in recent years**
 - In 2013, the national reported injury/illness rate for solid waste collection was 6.4, and 5.3 for landfills.
 - The collection injury/illness rate in 2010 was 5.4
- **NIOSH found reported injury rates and days away from work is significantly higher for public sector collection workers than in private sector**
 - Older workers/light duty/better reporting?

Solid Waste Accidents

Solid waste vehicles are involved in accidents with EVERYTHING:



Fires Continue to be a Problem



<https://youtu.be/lvwJ7xXG9Ek?t=43>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfeBdZxY5u0>

Improving Worker Safety

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 – Safety needs to be part of their DNA.
- Get visual – use photos and video to reach employees.
 - Most front-line workers will respond better to visual than written safety communication.

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 common causes—address them.**
- **Each municipality/company has different fleets, routes, safety leadership, budget constraints, etc.**



SWANA[®]

SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION
of North America

Improving Worker Safety

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 safety. Companies that do route observation on a regular basis see a substantial reduction in unsafe behaviors and accidents.

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

4. Use *Safety Monday* and Other Visual Communication Tools

- Communicate importance of safety frequently and consistently.
- Weekly/monthly safety meetings.
- Get creative with signs, posters, videos.



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 after route is completed.
 - If truck overturns, it can save your driver's/helper's life!



NYC – August 2011.

6. Distracted Driving Policy—Enforce it!

- Cell phone
- Texting
- Food and beverages
- Have a written policy!
- Are you enforcing it?



The National Safety Council recently reported that 27% of all crashes involve cell phone use or texting.

7. Focus on Backing/Rear End Collisions

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



Improving Worker Safety

8. Focus on Lifting and Slips/Trips/Falls

- These are the two most common injuries for solid waste workers.
- Lifting training - new hire and refresher
 - Workers are getting older and may be more prone to injury
- Consider limits on bag/container weights
- Why are your workers falling?
 - Correct footwear
 - Adjusting for inclement weather
 - Rushing





SWANA[®]

SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION
of North America

Safety at Disposal Facilities

9. Don't Forget About Disposal

Landfills, transfer stations and MRFs are challenging work environments:

- Pre-trip on heavy equipment
- Traffic rules – enforce them
- Truck separation at working face
- High viz for everyone
- Don't walk under open tailgate
- Frozen loads and swinging doors

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**
 - Too many solid waste employees wearing dark shirts on routes!
- **Shoes, gloves, hard hats, glasses**
 - Use observations on route or at facility to enforce PPE rules.





Improving Worker Safety

11. Take advantage of SWANA!

SWANA's expanded Safety Program includes webinars, weekly and monthly safety information, and frequent updates to chapters about accidents in their states. Our August 2015 WASTECON Safety Summit included 6 sessions that attracted 650 individuals interested in reducing accidents and injuries.

- Oct 29 Webinar – Post-collection safety
- Jan 2016 – Municipal data collection begins
- 2Q 2016 – First SWANA safety data report
- Aug 2016 – WASTECON in Indy!





SWANA[®]

SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION
of North America

Improving Worker Safety

12. ANSI Z245 Safety Standards

- **The National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) manages the development of national consensus safety standards for waste equipment (trucks, containers, balers, compactors).**
 - SWANA has a seat on the ANSI Z245 Committee
- **Z245 Standards provide a useful 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, and Plaintiffs' lawyers use them in lawsuits.**

Conclusions

- **Solid waste employees have high fatality and injury rates. Our vehicles are involved in too many fatal accidents.**
- **Successful employers are engaging employees and getting them to change their unsafe behaviors.**
- **SWANA is enhancing and expanding the safety resources it provides to members to help local governments and others improve their safety performance.**



SWANA[®]

SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION
of North America

Questions?

Thank you!

David Biderman

240-494-2254

dbiderman@swana.org