

Don't Get Caught In The CRUSH ZONE

Crush Zones Involved with Rear Packer Roll Over –Tool Box Talk

DEPARTMENT: _____ DATE PRESENTED: ____/____/2009

Earlier this year a New Jersey town experienced a tragedy. The following points are being shared with other Sanitation agencies in the hopes that no one will have to repeat the experience. The circumstances which are presented here were taken from initial reports and suppositions. They should not be taken as facts, but rather as points of discussion to relate to your operations

May 18, 2008 at about 10:30 am was a sunny morning. The roads were dry and visibility was clear. A three-person sanitation crew was using a rear packer to pickup bagged grass clippings curbside from residences in a northern section of town. As the crew finished one development and prepared to drive to the next area, about one half mile away, the two collectors got into the cab of the truck. Neither they, nor the driver were wearing seatbelts, although seatbelts were provided for three passengers in the cab's bench seat.

As the vehicle approached a controlled intersection, the light changed from green to yellow. The intersection is four lanes in either direction with left turn lanes. The driver maintained his speed and began to make his intended left turn. The driver reported feeling the load of bagged grass shift as he entered the turn. He steered into the lean of the truck, but may have over compensated. He again steered into the lean but the truck continued to tip and landed on the passenger side door, sliding to a stop about 40 feet later.



The three occupants were conscious when the vehicle came to a rest. The driver was injured slightly and self extricated. The middle passenger received minor injuries and also self-extricated through the broken out windshield.

The most severely injured worker was the passenger closest to the passenger-side door. He received neck, back, and arm injuries. It was later determined he had sustained broken vertebrae in his neck.

The driver and middle passenger thought they saw smoke, and fearing the truck was on fire, pulled the injured third passenger from the cab, through the windshield. In fact, there was no fire. The truck is not provided with first aid kit, fire extinguisher, or spill control. The consequences this accident: 2 workers sustained injuries that resulted in lost time, the total loss of the rear packer equipment and the unwanted notoriety of being front page news in the region's newspaper.

Discussion:

- 1) What factors contributed (or could have contributed) to the accident happening or to its severity?
 - Speed of vehicle.
 - Pressure to do job quickly
 - Conditions of tires / pre-trip inspection
 - Shifting of load (does a compacted load shift?)
 - Driver training / experience / attentiveness
- 2) What controls (engineering, Policies & Procedures, Personal Protective Equipment) could have prevented or mitigated this accident?
 - An enforced seatbelt policy
 - Fire extinguisher, first aid kit, and spill control (and training)