

Preventing Worker Injuries and Deaths From Moving Refuse Collection Vehicles

WARNING!

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

Take the following steps to protect yourself from injury when riding on or working near refuse collection vehicles:

1. Observe safe backing procedures.

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 coworker as a spotter.
- Use agreed-upon hand signals to communicate with the spotter.

Other crew members should do the following:

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

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.
- Stay clear of the vehicle's path.
- Avoid walking backward.

- 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.
- 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.

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 mile or less) at slow speeds (10 miles per hour or less).
- After the vehicle has stopped, step—do not jump—on or off riding steps.
- Wear slip-resistant footwear and avoid narrow cleats or spikes.
- 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 stops that could cause riders to be thrown from the steps.

For additional information, see ***NIOSH Alert: Preventing Worker Injuries and Deaths From Moving Refuse Collection Vehicles*** [DHHS (NIOSH) Publication 97-110]. Single copies of the Alert are available free from the following:

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