To prevent refuse collection injuries:

- **Employers should provide comprehensive employee safety training programs including identification of hazards posed by other motor vehicles in the area, and by riding on or working near moving refuse collection vehicles.**

- **Employers and employees should have routine maintenance programs for refuse collection vehicles including proper condition of tires.**

- **Don’t place yourself in a potentially hazardous situation. Workers should always stay alert.**

Last year, 1 refuse collector died while working. During the first 6 months this year, 4 workers suffered fatal traumatic injuries while working in or near a refuse collection vehicle in Kentucky.

The first case this year involved a worker who fell when he exited the cab of the refuse collection vehicle while the truck was moving forward uphill to enter a landfill. He stepped onto a step on the side-mounted fuel tank to reach the ground while the truck was slowly moving and his foot slipped. He slid under the truck and was run over.

A second case involved a county jail inmate on work release who was killed on a sanitation truck when a car slammed into the back of the sanitation truck on a 2-lane state highway. The incident happened at 7 am on a bright day and the driver of the car may have been blinded by the sun.

A fourth male was traveling on an interstate highway in an empty recycling truck. The front left tire deflated due to unknown reasons causing the driver to lose control of the vehicle. The seat-belted driver was in the far right lane. The truck swerved to the left across 2 lanes and the left shoulder, and struck a concrete divider. The truck straddled the concrete divider below the cab and the truck slid 100 feet breaking the wall. This caused the fuel tank to rupture and ignited the truck. The truck came to rest on its side with the caps on the south side of the interstate and the truck body on the north side. The driver and the cab were incinerated due to the heat of the resulting fire.
Safety training should include
safe driving and riding, defensive driv-
ing techniques\(^1\), how to avoid inattentive
and/or impatient drivers, and what to do
in an emergency situation.

For safe driving\(^2\), drivers should:
1) check for a signal from rider before
moving the vehicle
2) stop backing vehi-
cle when visual contact is lost with rider
and
3) resume backing only when visual
contact with rider is made.

For safe riding, riders should:
1) ride inside the cab or on specifically de-
signated riding steps
2) remain inside the
cab or on a riding step until the vehicle
is fully stopped and
3) should not use
the riding step while the vehicle is back-
ing, exceeding 10 mph, or traveling
more than 0.2 miles\(^3\).

Employers Should Provide Com-
prehensive Employee Safety
Training Programs Including
Identification of Hazards Posed
By Other Motor Vehicles In The
Area, & By Riding On Or
Working Near Moving Refuse
Collection Vehicles.

Don’t Place Yourself in a Poten-
tially Hazardous Situation. Workers
Should Always Stay Alert.

Riders and drivers should recognize poten-
tial hazardous areas around the refuse collection
vehicle. Blind spots, tight spots and heavy traffic
areas should be assessed every time the vehicle
stops.

For safety protection, collectors should
wear visible reflective clothing and slipresistant
footwear to prevent falls.

References:
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For more information, contact:
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