



SAFETY MONDAY

February 20, 2012

People Sleeping in Dumpsters

There have been several incidents this winter in which a homeless person sleeping in a dumpster has been dumped into a garbage truck and crushed to death. In one such incident, the individual was compacted in the truck and his body discovered at an Ohio recycling facility.

It is very difficult to prevent homeless (or drunk) people from going to sleep in a dumpster, and equally difficult to hear them over the noise generated by the truck. However, even homeless people deserve to be safe, and to the extent possible, it would be useful for drivers to keep their eyes and ears open for a possible person in the dumpster when he or she lifts and dumps it. Drivers should:

- Consider lowering the radio when dumping the container so a dumped person can be heard.
- Consider waiting a few seconds before packing a dumped load.
- Avoid pushing containers forward because an individual may be sleeping between the container and the wall.
- Look for evidence someone may be in the dumpster if a container needs to be rolled out to the truck.

It is important for containers to be properly labeled with warning labels to defend against potential claims and litigation.

Having someone pop out of a dumpster in the middle of the night can certainly scare your drivers, but it's better than compacting someone in the truck. No one wants to be responsible for another human being's death, or wants to find someone's body in a load.

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