

True Stories

Trucking industry injuries and prevention tips



Industry: **Waste/recycle pick up and haul**
Occupation: **Truck driver**
Task: **Emptying community recycle bins**



TIPS TO LIVE BY

Employers

- Keep communication open between you and your workers. Make sure they know to report any injuries immediately.
- Invite your workers to share their injury prevention ideas with you.
- Develop strategies to reduce lifting on the job. For example, allow your drivers to refuse to pick up over-weight bins or cans.

Drivers

- Talk to your employer if you are physically compensating for pain on the job.
- Share your ideas to make your workplace safer with your employer.

Can a rotten day get worse... *you bet!*

A 53-year-old driver was having “one of those days.” He had already smashed the thumb on his right hand and was compensating for the injury by attempting to finish his work using only his left arm.

He still had to empty a large community recycle bin, so he decided to reduce the weight he’d need to lift one-handed by scooping out the plastic bottles that he could reach with his left hand using a garbage can lid. Unfortunately, many of the plastic bottles were still full. While scooping, he felt a pain like a pulled muscle in his left shoulder. This pain turned out to be a torn rotator cuff. At the end of the day, he took home not just one, but two painful injuries.

The injuries to this dedicated worker ultimately cost nearly \$46,000 to the workers’ compensation system and he was off work for more than four months. Many shoulder injuries cost even more in both time and money.

Continuing to work while compensating for an injury often causes additional injuries, or may exacerbate an existing injury. If a worker is in pain at work, it’s time to evaluate what can be done. A short-term investment in light duty, job rotation or a helper might save an employer’s bottom line for years to come and prevent further injury that could impact a worker for the rest of the worker’s life.

www.KeepTruckingSafe.org

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SHARP Program

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