

Safety and health alert

02/98 Truck safety

Incident

A 23 year old labourer employed for the day from a labour hire company to deliver pamphlets in letterboxes was run over by a nine tonne waste collection truck in Kenwick on 3 April 1998, and suffered severe crush injuries and fractures to his right leg and foot.

The labourer accompanied the truck, receiving directions and replacement stock of pamphlets from the driver.

The truck was a purpose built dual control waste collection truck. It was being driven from the left driving position, proceeding forward very slowly on full left lock when the labourer approached the driver. He was run over by the left front wheel.

Factors

1. The truck was generally not stationary whenever the labourer approached the truck for instructions.
2. While the waste collection task was a normal task for the truck driver, the additional duty of directing a pamphlet drop at the same time was not
3. The hazard of approaching a moving vehicle, particularly from in front of articulated wheels, was not adequately identified as a potential hazard by management, the truck driver or labourer.

Recommendations

1. If a truck has its engine running, a person approaching the truck must gain the attention of the driver, who must bring the truck to a stop before it is approached.
2. When management require additional tasks of an employee, they must ensure any associated hazards are identified, assessed and controlled.
3. Employers have an absolute requirement to ensure workers are provided with sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to perform their tasks safely.
4. Employees must continually assess their working environment to ensure their own safety and health at work and that of their workmates. Workers must keep well clear of any truck in motion.

Further Information

Further information can be obtained from the WorkSafe internet site www.worksafe.wa.gov.au, or by contacting customer service on 1300 307 877 or email: safety@docep.wa.gov.au.

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