

Struck By Garbage truck—Insp # 1660587 BFI Waste Systems of North America, LLC

A 52 year old female employee was struck by a garbage truck while working as a spotter at the working face of a landfill.

The victim, a Facility Supervisor of BFI Waste Systems of North America, LLC, was mortally injured when she was struck by, and run over by, a side-loader garbage truck that was owned and operated by another company.

BFI Waste Systems of North America, LLC, operates a solid waste landfill also known as the Republic South Shelby Landfill.

An inspection was conducted at the solid waste landfill where it was determined that the victim was the spotter at the turnaround area of the landfill. The spotter's duties include wearing high visibility personal protective equipment (PPE) while directing garbage trucks to and from the working face to dump their loads and maintaining minimum truck spacing distances. It was learned that garbage trucks line up in a single file along the service road to wait their turn to dump their load at the working face.

The turnaround area of the landfill was approximately 75 feet wide by approximately 100 feet deep. The service road leading to and from the turnaround area ran roughly parallel to the 75-foot-wide section along the west end of the turnaround area. The working face was along the east end of the turnaround area, opposite the service road. There were two working face screens or fences at the working face. The screens or fences help to minimize loose trash from being blown about by the wind while the garbage trucks are dumping their loads at the working face. The landfill did not have a "spotter zone" that was clearly visible, protected and designated.

The truck driver was operating a Peterbilt/LaBrie Atomizer ASL Series automated side-loader garbage truck. He said the victim gave him the "go ahead" and he turned to the right on the road to start backing up to the working face. He said as he was backing up, he started hearing horns and he stopped. He noticed a driver on his right side pointing down as he was pulling out. He then noticed a driver on his left side, getting out of his truck and pointing to the right side of his truck.

The Peterbilt/LaBrie Atomizer ASL Series automated side-loader garbage truck is equipped with a total of four cameras: rear-view, claw-view, hopper-view, and the drive camera (front-view and cab-view). The rear-view camera came on only when the garbage truck was put into reverse. The claw-view camera allows the operator to see where the claw was in relation to the garbage container. The hopper-view camera allows the operator to see the inlet of the hopper. The drive camera is the only one of the four cameras on the garbage truck that has video and audio recording capability; it records what is in front of the garbage truck and the inside of the cab.

According to the video recording of the drive camera (front-view), the victim is seen giving the driver, as he was sitting in the truck line on the service road, the 'go-ahead' signal and then walked in the general direction of the working face. As the truck driver drives forward and turns to the right to get into position to back-up, the victim

disappears from the view of the drive camera (front view).

According to the video recording of the drive camera (cab-view), the victim is briefly seen in the driver side door window as the driver is driving forward and to the right to get into position to back-up. The driver is seen bringing the garbage truck to a halt, then putting it in reverse. He is seen looking primarily in the driver side view mirror as he is backing up and turning to the left towards the working face. He looked in either the passenger side view mirror or the rear-view camera screen just before the incident occurred. He backed up towards the working face, and at some point, the passenger side rear tires ran over the victim.

The victim was wearing her required PPE (e.g.: high-visibility vest, hard hat, etc.); however, the landfill did not have a “spotter zone” that was clearly visible, protected and designated.

Citation(s) as Originally Issued

A complete inspection was conducted at the accident scene. Some of the items cited may not directly relate to the fatality.

Citation 1 Item 1

Type of Violation: Serious

\$4500

TCA 50-3-105(1): The employer did not furnish to each of his employees, conditions of employment and a place of employment free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees.

In that employees are exposed to struck-by and run-over hazards when standing out in the open directing garbage truck traffic at the working face of the landfill.

Among other methods, feasible and acceptable means of abatement would be to provide a clearly visible, protected and designated "Spotter Zone" for the spotter, and to enforce rules requiring spotters to stay in the "Spotter Zone" at the turnaround area of the landfill.

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