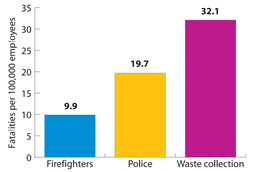
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Solid Waste and Recycling Division

An industry that puts workers at risk, puts communities at risk.
Teamster-Community partnerships seek solutions.

Waste & recycling work is hazardous to workers . . .

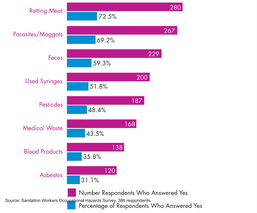
Workers face serious hazards on the job and a high rate of injuries and fatalities. A sanitation worker is 10 times more likely to die on the job than the average workier.



Sources: http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/cfoi/cfh0209.pdf ; http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/cfoi/cfh0205.pdf ; http://www.bls.gov/ces/current/ces _nat.htm#b33 0000. 2005

In addition to vehicle accidents, workers in the industry are exposed to numerous hazards.

In the past three months, have you been exposed to or in contact with the following?

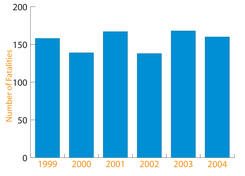


Source: Sanitation Workers Occupational Hazards Survey, 388 respondents

. . . to the public . . .

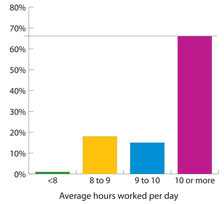
Between 140 – 170 people die in garbage truck accidents each year.

(Sanitation workers and members of the general public.)



Source: Center for National Truck and Bus Statistics, University of Michigan, Transportation Research Institute, Trucks involved in fatal accidents database (March 2007).

Production trumps safety:
66 percent of sanitation workers average 10 or more hours of work per day.



Latinos make up a significant and growing portion of the waste and recycling workforce

Source: 2008 EEO-1 National Aggregate Report by NAICS-8 Code www.eeoc.gov/eeo/statistics/employment/jobpat-eeo/2008 Accessed: 3/5/10

In 2003, Latinos made up 24% of the industry workforce.

. . . and to communities — especially those of color.

It has long been known that waste transfer stations, the most common waste facilities in urban areas, are disproportionately found in communities of color. [need good cite here]

Communities surrounding waste facilities face hazards from emissions from idling trucks, particulate matter such as dust, and disease carrying vectors such as rats and roaches.

Source: A Regulatory Strategy for Siting and Operating Waste Transfer Stations, prepared by the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council of the Environmental Protection Agency, Waste Transfer Station Working Group, March 2000, at http://www.epa.gov/Compliance/resources/publications/ej/waste_trans_reg_strtgy_exec_sum.pdf accessed March 23, 2010.

gaia Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives
Global Anti-Incinerator Alliance

The Teamsters and GAIA are building coalitions to campaign for worker and community health and safety.

Over 160 organizations have signed our statement of principles and policy guidelines and the partnership, with the support of the Public Welfare Foundation, is conducting a study of safety and health issues for reccling workers.

Public Welfare FOUNDATION

Three Steps to Build the 21st Century Resource Recovery Infrastructure

1. By calling for a national recycling rate goal of 75 percent of all municipal solid waste by 2015, the Obama Administration will set the stage for federal, state, and local policies to follow.

2. The way to transform the U.S. waste infrastructure into a resource recovery infrastructure is to level the playing field for emerging programs by ending subsidies, tax credits and other federal support for landfills and incinerators.

3. Invest in the 21st Century Resource Recovery Infrastructure.

Recycling programs can quickly create jobs.

Increasing the national recycling rate is a direct and economical way to quickly create significant numbers of green, quality, living wage jobs in disadvantaged communities, since currently only one third of municipal solid waste is recycled. Recycling industries include activities such as curbside collection of materials, deconstruction of buildings and products, processing of recycled materials, composting, repair and reuse businesses, and manufacturing of new products using recycled content. These industries already provide more than 1.1 million jobs in the U.S., which is comparable in size to the U.S. auto manufacturing and machinery manufacturing industries.[1] Recycling industries generate an annual payroll of nearly $37 billion and gross over $236 billion in annual revenue. In addition, recycling industries provide far more jobs than waste incinerators and landfills. The job skills necessary for this industry range from entry level to high skilled labor. These industries can put Americans to work immediately and provide pathways to prosperity through career ladder opportunities.