Sanitation Worker Dies in Truck Crash



Twenty-five-year-old Michael Occhino was alone, driving his 20-ton sanitation truck to a New York Sanitation Department garage. Sometime around 3 a.m., near the end of his night shift, his truck hit a slick patch on an elevated expressway.

The slippery surface caused him to lose control of the vehicle. The truck careened into a guardrail, knocking out 60 feet of ironwork, and tipped over, dangling precariously 25 feet above the ground. Rescue workers closed all three lanes while they cleared up the scene. It was almost noon when the expressway re-opened.

When the incident happened, Occhino, who was not wearing his seatbelt, was flung out of the cab, falling some 20 feet to the pavement of the road below. Specialty crews from the New York fire and rescue service could not revive him; and he was pronounced dead in hospital.

Investigation by New York police discovered that the reason that the pavement of the expressway was slick was that diesel fuel from another vehicle had apparently leaked onto the wet surface.

Michael Occhino might still be alive if someone's vehicle hadn't leaked. Do you report leaking or defective equipment when you see it? Even a few drops can make all the difference.

The victim might also have lived if he had been wearing his seatbelt. Motor vehicle crashes kill more workers every year than any other cause. Too many of the victims are still not wearing seatbelts. For the sake of yourself, your family, and your friends, wear yours!

Source: The New York Sun, New York, August 29 2006