Tailgate Safety Reminders

(Safety Brief)

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PACIF has developed Safety Briefs to help municipal highway supervisors maintain a high level of safety and hazard awareness among employees. We recommend using these short "tailgate trainings" on a regular basis – and **at least once a month**. If you need a particular safety topic, please contact us at losscontrol@vlct.org.

Information for Supervisors

Every year, especially in winter, PACIF receives a significant number of hand and finger claims that are linked to tailgate use or operation. All of these injuries are preventable. By warning and educating employees about the hazard, we can prevent injuries!

Use the discussion points below to train all employees, new and seasoned, about the potential hazards of dump truck tailgates, latch pins, and chains. Observe how employees work with this equipment, periodically reminding them about the proper safety practices. As is the case with all safety and other policies, hold employees accountable if they do not follow your procedures.

Talking Points for Training

Share the following reasons why tailgate injuries occur:

- Trying to dislodge a rock, frozen sand, or other object that's caught between the tailgate and the truck bed. When the object is removed, the tailgate suddenly slams shut, crushing some part of the worker's body between the tailgate and the truck.
- Holding on to a latch pin while trying to push or pull the tailgate for one reason or another. Doing this can easily jam fingers and hands between the tailgate pins and the "dogs", or restraint chains causing significant injuries.

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- Manually controlling the tailgate position when the lower hinges were open and the bed was raised. Multiple pinch points can cause serious damage and lost work time.

Point out these simple ways to prevent these injuries:

1. Explain specific ways to deal with lodged materials. For example, workers should always use a tool rather than a hand or arm to remove jams, and the tool should be long enough for the worker to stand away from the tailgate in case the load is released suddenly. Make sure that every truck is always equipped with an appropriate tool (such as a long-handled shovel or crow bar) and that the tailgate hazard warning sticker is visible.
2. Make it clear to employees that if a blockage cannot be dislodged, they should dump the load instead of risking their personal safety.
3. If it is absolutely necessary to dislodge materials that are jammed in the tailgate, employ a lockout/tagout approach so that the energy stored in the tailgate or in materials in the dump body is controlled. Contact your PACIF Loss Control Consultant if you have questions about this. However, in the vast majority of cases, dumping the load is the best solution.

Safety Training Attendance Roster

Trainer:	Training Date:
1.	9.
2.	10.
3.	11.
4.	12.
5.	13.

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6.	14.
7.	15.
8.	16.

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