

What will that decision cost you...

a true story



Tips to live by

DRIVERS

- Report dangerous conditions to your employer.
- Follow up on your requests for safe equipment. Remember the “squeaky wheel.”

EMPLOYERS

- If your worker requests safer equipment, provide it.

Consider this. Your company has a policy for reporting safety issues. Your company has someone who investigates the issues as they are reported. As the manager, are you going to put more weight on the investigation report or on the worker report? This true story might help you reconsider.

A 43-year-old, experienced, waste haul driver on a commercial route runs into an issue. There is an eight yard container with steel wheels on his route that he knows is dangerous. If it were a straight stab, there wouldn't be a problem, but it isn't. He needs to pull the container out and maneuver it into position. Not an easy task, since he is pulling against a slope as well.

He wrote it up as a safety hazard and requested two smaller containers to replace the single large container. Nothing happened. He presumed it was investigated and that the employer ignored the request assuming he was just being lazy.

One day, as he hefted to pull the container out, he felt a pain in his back. Afterwards, when he checked the onboard scale, he knew that he had just pulled a 780 pound container. He reported the injury to his employer, but continued to work. Over the next couple of weeks he kept re-injuring the area until shooting pains drove him to seek medical care.

Professionally, he's been off work for months. Personally, this active and involved dad has pain limiting his ability to play and even lift his daughter. How much will this ignored request cost the company? How much will it cost the worker? His family?

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