

## **SWANA Records 30 Solid Waste Worker Fatalities in 2019**

### ***Pushes to raise awareness of worker safety with support of OSHA's Safe + Sound Week***

**Silver Spring, MD** – The [Solid Waste Association of North America](#) (SWANA) has identified at least 30 solid waste worker fatalities in 2019 in the United States and Canada. These tragic deaths make it clear that more work remains to be done to improve industry safety and is why SWANA is supporting national [Safe + Sound Week](#), August 12–18, 2019.

An average of more than four worker fatalities have occurred each month this year through July 31. Collection remains the deadliest aspect of the job, with 19 people killed. Of those deaths, 31 percent were single vehicle crashes and 26 percent were the result of a worker being struck by their own vehicle.

Post-collection safety remains a concern as well, with seven on-the-job fatalities at landfills, three at MRFs, and one at a transfer station. Even when not on the road, being struck by another vehicle or heavy equipment was the most common cause of death.

“SWANA strongly supports OSHA’s Safe + Sound Week and urges industry employers and employees to take advantage of the safety resources provided by OSHA,” stated David Biderman, SWANA’s Executive Director and CEO. He added, “Solid waste collection is the fifth most dangerous job in the United States; we need to reduce the frequency of incidents involving our workers and vehicles.”

Texas has had the most worker deaths this year, with five as of July 31. January and June were the worst months, both seeing seven deaths each. The average age of the victim when known was 49 years old.

Fortunately, the solid waste industry is not alone in its fight to eradicate worker fatalities. The third annual OSHA Safe + Sound Week brings together more than 1,800 participants and 220 partners, including SWANA, to help raise awareness about workers’ health and safety. We believe every workplace should have a safety and health program that includes management leadership, worker participation, and a systematic approach to finding and fixing hazards.

Solid waste employers can help make real change this year by participating in a [local event](#), [developing](#) a safety and health program, engaging with [SWANA Chapter Safety Ambassadors](#), and encouraging employees to take the [SWANA Safety Pledge](#) to show their commitment.

SWANA’s efforts to improve industry safety will continue at the [7<sup>th</sup> SWANA Safety Summit](#) taking place at [WASTECON® 2019](#) in Phoenix, Arizona, October 21 – 24, 2019.

For more information on SWANA’s safety programs, visit [swana.org/safety](http://swana.org/safety).