Celebrating Hard-Working Men and Women Who Help Keep Communities Clean

Every week the big green garbage truck rumbles into the neighborhood and the mechanical spectacle of its hydraulic arm grabbing, lifting, dumping and returning trash and recycling carts to the curb commences.

This commonplace show is accompanied by a brief symphony of safety warning beeps and the crunching of trash being compacted before the driver moves on to the next home. Some of Waste Management of New Mexico's most loyal residential fans and avid watchers are the kids who eagerly await the arrival of their garbage man on collection day.

June 17 marks the start of National Garbage Man Week. There will be no fanfare or parades for the hard-working men and women who help keep the community clean. There will, however, be appreciation expressed, especially by the wee ones who may leave a drawing or a card they've made for their favored trash truck driver to commemorate the week. Our drivers often comment that the smiles, waves and excitement of the kids in the neighborhoods they service are a real bright spot in their workday.

WM reminds parents and guardians to please teach kids to play it safe around garbage trucks. We advise everyone to watch our operations safely from the sidewalk or front yard and never try to touch a truck or add anything to a cart while it's being serviced.

For more information about National Garbage Man Dan and Week visit www.garbagemanday.org.

Garbage Truck Fascination

The fascination many children have with garbage trucks is a phenomenon that has persisted for generations. For some, the interest is undoubtedly associated with the excitement of having a larger-than-life working truck show up in front of their house. Child development experts have noted that weekly trash collection becomes part of the natural comings and goings of things for kids. Along with a parent leaving for work, lunch eaten at noon, and a book read at bedtime, the garbage truck servicing the trash is one of the routine and reliable “events” that help children feel secure.

Also, if you stop to think about it, watching the garbage man do his/her job is one way toddlers can begin to learn the simple sequencing of things. (Their empty juice box goes in the trash not the recycling. The big bag of trash goes in the bigger trash cart. The trash cart gets rolled out to the curb. The garbage truck comes and takes the trash away. The empty cart gets rolled back to the house.)

TRIVIA: Garbage Men/Women and Garbage Trucks

GARBAGE COLLECTORS: 99 percent of trash collectors are men, but more and more women are stepping up to the job.

HISTORY: Benjamin Franklin initiated the first street sweeping service in the U.S. in 1762 with an act regulating the “pitching, paving and cleaning” the streets of Philadelphia.

JOB TITLE: There are many titles for the people who collect the trash: Garbage Men, Trash Collectors, Sanitation Engineers, Dustmen (British).

SAFETY: When Newsweek reported the top 10 most dangerous jobs for 2019, they listed “Refuse and Recyclable Material Collectors” at No.5. Studies confirm that one of the biggest dangers is trash collectors and trash trucks getting hit by vehicles.

SERVICE: During a standard work shift, a WM trash collector operating a side-loader truck will service between 800 and 1,500 curbside trash or recycle carts during a single shift depending on the route.

TRUCK: A typical trash and recycling collection truck weighs between 33,000 and 51,000 pounds when empty and can collect about 9 tons before the driver must return to a transfer station or landfill to empty the truck.

SUSTAINABILITY: While many trash collection trucks run on diesel fuel, Waste Management is growing its fleet of cleaner running compressed natural gas (CNG) trucks. In New Mexico, WM has 32 CNG trucks in its fleet.

About Waste Management of New Mexico

Waste Management of New Mexico has served local New Mexico communities for 45 years. With more than 240 employees, working in 14 sites across the state, Waste Management of New Mexico delivers comprehensive collection, recycling and disposal services for residential, commercial and industrial customers. Committed to providing environmental solutions for a better future, the company continues to expand its fleet of clean-running compressed natural gas (CNG) trucks and opened its first CNG fueling station in New Mexico in 2018.

For more information about Waste Management visit www.wm.com/newmexico .

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