



IMPORTANT

PRIORITY 2 OF 3 · ACTION RECOMMENDED

BODY CHECKS BEFORE THANKSGIVING

FOLLOW YOUR BODY MANUFACTURER'S MANUAL —
THESE ARE GUIDELINES

COUNTER HANDOUT

Preventive Maintenance & Readiness Notice

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RDK TRUCK SALES · TAMPA, FLORIDA · EST. 1997

HOLIDAY TRASH IS COMING. IS YOUR REFUSE BODY READY FOR IT?

From Thanksgiving to New Year's, household waste jumps about 25 percent. Your packer, hydraulics, tailgate, and arm take that hit. Get them checked now — not in December.

Applies to: Heil · McNeilus · New Way · Labrie · Loadmaster · Amrep · Petersen packer bodies · Galbreath · Galfab · Pac-Mac · Pac-Tech roll-off hoists · other packer and hoist bodies

+25%

more household waste from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day (EPA)

1,000 lb

extra garbage per household for the season (Republic Services)

800–1,200

hydraulic cycles a refuse body already runs on a normal route

1–4 days

off the road for a hose failure or a lift arm cylinder leak

The chassis is not what takes the truck off the route in December. The body is.

What the holidays do to your truck

- **More material, and the wrong kind.** Boxes, wrapping paper, and foam are light and bulky. They fill the body faster and do not pack like wet household garbage — so the packer cycles more times per ton, at higher pressure and higher heat.
- **Double loads.** Hillsborough County runs no pickup on Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, or New Year's Day and has no make-up days. The next scheduled day picks up two collections' worth. Most Florida counties work the same way.
- **Florida wear.** Heat and salt air wear hydraulic seals and wiring faster than the manufacturer's book assumes. Field intervals here run shorter than the manual.
- **Christmas trees in January.** The surge does not end on January 1 — tree pickup runs through the first two weeks of the month.

The parts that fail first — and what they cost you

- **Hydraulic hoses.** Up to half of all hydraulic downtime. A blown hose at the transfer station with a full load is hours of delay and a scrambled backup truck.
- **Cylinder seals.** A weeping rod in the morning is the seal that bypasses under load in the afternoon. Weak compaction shows up long before a visible drip.
- **Dirty fluid.** About three-quarters of contamination comes in over the packer cylinders. Trash dumped behind the blade bakes on at 150 degrees and gets pulled past the wiper seal on the next stroke.
- **Packer blade and wear shoes.** Worn shoes mean lost compaction and jams that stop the route. On heavy routes this is a 90-day check, not six months.
- **Gripper pads, pins, and bushings.** An automated arm makes 800 to 1,000 lifts a day. Worn grippers drop carts and throw the arm out of alignment.
- **Downtime.** One Florida service provider puts unplanned refuse-truck downtime at \$500 to \$1,200 an hour once wages, missed disposal windows, overtime, and penalties are counted.

Do the inspection on the back of this sheet before mid-November.

Walk every body against it, pull a hydraulic fluid sample from every unit, order what you find in October, and stagger the work so you never lose two trucks on the same collection day. Turn this sheet over — and keep it on the shop wall through January.

Pre-holiday body inspection — every unit, engine off for the hands-on items

Hydraulic fluid and filters

- ☐ Pull a fluid sample — milky means water, dark and metallic means wear. Near the 2,000–4,000 hour change? Change it now
- ☐ Change return, suction, and in-line filters; check the breather cap
- ☐ Reservoir full after a complete cycle, not before
- ☐ Right fluid only — AW-46 or AW-68 as the body calls for, never mixed

Hoses and fittings

- ☐ Wet spots, bulges, exposed braid, kinks, cracked covers, rubbing; clamps and sleeving at every chafe point
- ☐ Fittings: corrosion, cracked crimps, weeping, movement at the collar
- ☐ Flex each hose — stiff or crunchy means replace
- ☐ Replace any hose over three years old regardless of looks

Cylinders — packer, tailgate, arm, hoist

- ☐ Rods: scoring, pitting, oil film, weeping seals; alignment on packer and hoist cylinders
- ☐ Clear all trash off the packer cylinders and from behind the blade

Pump, PTO, and relief valve

- ☐ Run everything under load — listen for whine, cavitation, slow or jerky travel
- ☐ Relief valve to spec. Never crank it up to cover a weak pump
- ☐ PTO engagement; no pooling under the pump

Packer, hopper, and body

- ☐ Measure blade and wear shoes; inspect guide rails and hopper floor
- ☐ Cracked welds, cracked metal, loose or missing bolts on body and hopper
- ☐ Body mounts: cracked welds, missing hardware, any movement
- ☐ Ejector panel seals, ejection cylinder rods, locking pins; no refuse near the engine or exhaust

Tailgate

- ☐ Seal: tears, flattening, gaps, leaking liquid
- ☐ Tailgate locks fully lock and fully release; open-light and alarm work
- ☐ Both support props present; hinge pins and bushings for play

Arms, forks, hoists, and safety

- ☐ ASL: gripper pads, pins, bushings; arm drift at the slew bearing; cameras clean and aligned
- ☐ Front loader: arm and fork pins and bushings, fork tips, top door
- ☐ Roll-off: cable or reeving cylinder, hook, sheaves, rollers, container locks, tarp
- ☐ All lights, strobes, cameras, back-up alarm, interlocks, e-stops; safety decals readable

Seven daily habits that carry the body through January

- 1. Cycle every circuit before leaving the yard** and look for leaks and worn parts.
- 2. Clear behind the blade every day.** Do not dump behind it.
- 3. Never leave trash on the truck overnight.**
- 4. Wipe the cylinder rods** and look for an oil film each shift.
- 1. Check the reservoir and look under the truck** before every shift.
- 2. Mix wet bins in with dry cardboard loads** — it packs better and lubricates the body.
- 3. Report weeping, drift, or slow cycles the same day.**

Have these on the shelf before Thanksgiving

Hose assemblies with fittings and clamps · filters and the right AW fluid for a full change · cylinder seal kits · gripper pads, pins, and bushings · packer wear shoes and rail strips · tailgate seal and latch parts · body lights, strobes, camera lenses · roll-off cable, hook, and rollers. **Have them on hand before the surge, whoever you source them from.**

Questions about anything on this sheet? Call us.

We are glad to talk through what you are seeing on your trucks, whether or not the work comes to our shop. There is no charge for a conversation. Check back at rdk.com for more tips and bulletins through the season, and for the full bulletin with sources.

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