

Solid Waste Industry

Client: Solid Waste District
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Case Study



Sensear 
Hear Speech Stay Protected



Background:

A typical Solid Waste District processes millions of tons of waste for landfill and recycling. Most workers within these facilities are mission critical employees who work in fast paced and hyperactive environments.

The process of collecting and managing the waste is fraught with noise and potential dangers to employees. Most workers are public sector workers and in many states this means workers are not covered by OSHA legislation, so workers compensation is the sole remedy when health issues and fatalities occur. According to NSC 2010, over 8 million workers are not covered by OSHA regulations.

Due to the high noise levels, this Solid Waste District instituted a new Hearing Conservation program to protect the hearing of their valuable workers. This involved reducing hazards with a number of options: Engineering Noise Controls, Administrative Noise Controls and Hearing Protection.



The Problem:

In considering a solution for Hearing Protection, it was felt that it had to address two main problems that existed for this particular Solid Waste District:

1. There was a culture of acceptance that workers will lose their hearing (“I will lose my hearing, it’s inevitable” and “Lets face it, there is nothing you can do about it”)
2. It was found that typical Hearing Protection would not provide the best solution because:
 - Significant risk of back over and run over hazards
 - Significant risk of vehicle collisions
 - Significant risk of loading accidents
 - Possible failure to hear warning signals

To ensure worker safety it was critical to find a hearing protection solution that overcame these problems. Importantly, because of the nature of the environment, the ability to hear and stay protected was critical in the evaluation.

Solution:

In Sensear, the client found a solution that delivered the following unique benefits for Hearing Protection:

- 360 degree situational awareness to reduce the risks of accidents
- The ability to communicate via face-to-face, Two-way radio and Bluetooth® cell phone
- Enhanced Hearing Protection by limiting noise into the ear to 82dB

The Sensear solution was effectively adopted by providing on site training with the knowledge that workers were not compromising their hearing experience by wearing the Sensear Hearing Protection solution.

Results:

The results were “remarkable” according to the key contact at the customer site. The Sensear headsets:

- Minimized errors
- Improved efficiency
- Improved morale
- Improved overall safety
- Were well received by workers

The solution was considered to be such a success that there are now plans to implement the Sensear solution to the Water Services Division in 2012.



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