

# Solid Waste Report

RESOURCE RECOVERY • RECYCLING • COLLECTION • DISPOSAL

## Interview: DriveCam Offers Driver Monitoring, Safety System Via Camera

*A new safety system seems to be sweeping across the largest solid waste industry fleets. DriveCam offers companies a view of what drivers see in the seconds before an accident, and what the driver is doing and saying. The goals behind the technology: to cut down on incidents, improve driver behavior and offer a defense in court.*

SWR recently interviewed Rob Bartles of DriveCam about their camera system. SWR questions of in boldface; Bartles' responses are in plain type. He can be contacted at (866) 419-5861.

**This looks like a commonsense idea, which could explain why nobody has come up with it yet.**

We have been in business for a few years — since 1998. DriveCam is employed in a range of fleets from taxis to big over-the-road trucks. It was started by an entrepreneur in San Diego who was in a road rage incident. At that point he created a camera to mount on the windshield to document risky behavior.

The company took a major turn about three years ago when we brought in a new CEO and went through a couple of rounds of funding. So now we are not just a camera company any more.

What we really do is process information to help companies reduce their risk profiles. That's a fancy way a saying we collect a lot of videos, we're analyzing those, and we're helping our clients go back and talk to drivers so that they can improve their behavior and not get in wrecks.

**What kind of training is involved with this?**

We train our clients in a couple of ways. First, to run the program to understand what we do with the video information we collect, how to run the program on their site and also how use our software.

We have web-based software that people can dial into and access the videos that we have already analyzed and filtered for them.

There is also training on how to talk to drivers. That is the key to making sure drivers improve their ability to drive vehicles and make themselves safer. That is the real benefit of the program.

**What is involved with that in terms of classroom time?**

Typically when we bring on a new client we will send them some information: shelf kits with DVDs

on what is DriveCam, how to coach a driver, how to use the program or best practices associated with the program. We will go out on a new site and spend a half a day to a day with the supervisors and managers who are going to be using [the product] and explain the elements and components of the system, how the service works, and how best to get their bang for their buck on reducing risks.

*(Continued on next page)*

### Tech Offers Companies Ability To Document Driving Events

DriveCam offered Waste Connections Inc. (WCI) something the company tried for decades: To capture and correct real-time bad behavior.

"The new technology that has come down the pipe; it has enabled them to solve some problems in this area," WCI's Ken Rose told SWR. "Their system helps us as risk managers in a very usable and workable fashion."

The company is implementing the system nationally across all major business lines in all four geographic regions. DriveCam recently completed a one-year test run of the system in a select group of vehicles, realizing a marked increase in driver safety and exoneration of drivers who were not at fault in collisions.

The company laid the system out for its drivers, he added. "We tell them what we are doing and why we are doing it. So far, they have been able to see the positive results from it.

"Is there a risk for them to be caught doing something inappropriately? Absolutely!" Rose said. "We let them know that. But we also let them know that the primary reason for installing this is not to put an all-seeing-eye in their truck — which we can't do and this system does not do any way — but that it is designed to protect them and to protect the public in which they operate."

The system also works in a way that provides exoneration to drivers in the event they are involved in something that is not their fault, he added. It only takes one or two of these types of situations to make a believer out of a driver.

"When you have a piece of video tape that exonerates him from a situation where without it he might be blamed, is very conciliatory," Rose said.

Contact: Ken Rose, WCI, (916) 608-8200.

**Interview: DriveCam Offers Driver Monitoring, Safety System Via Camera (Cont.)**

**In my research I came across an issue of Inc. 500 magazine the question of driver privacy ...**

That is an issue we always address everywhere we go. The camera is recording video and audio all the time. When there is an event — a force exhibited on the vehicle like a hard brake or a swerving — at that time it stops and saves the eight seconds before the trigger and the subsequent four second afterwards.

We can't access, a supervisor or manager can't access the camera from their office. The video that is captured is really a control of the driver. If they are driving safely and carefully, there is just going to be those videos associated with that behavior.

Secondly, we're talking about a 12-second video clip and drivers over time are typically on less than one video per week. All we are looking at is way less than a minute of driving time over a week.

DriveCam is trying to focus on those critical moments of risky driving behavior and that's all. We are not interested in seeing if the driver is drinking his coffee or any other issues that are going on in the cab.

**Have there been any union issues associated with this?**

We deal with unions all the time and we have broad acceptance with unions across the country. One of the things we can do is show when drivers are exonerated from particular incidents.

We capture videos all the time where in a large commercial vehicle a driver would be blamed, or the company might be blamed for half of the accident, because it is difficult to determine after the fact what happened. With [the product] you know exactly what happened. We are able to exonerate drivers and get broad acceptance in that since.

**How many waste haulers do you have as customers?**

We work with many of the mid-tier subcontractors and of course we are working now with the top six public solid waste companies in the United States.

**I imagine officials with top companies are always asking who benefits.**

There are a variety of ways DriveCam helps the customer save money. The biggest one is in all those property and casualty claims. A video of what

occurred will often save companies on their litigation expenses. We also move the dial on fuel and maintenance too. When drivers are driving safely, they are also typically driving more slowly, more conservatively and that has an impact on brakes, suspension, all of those things and fuel savings.

Where we really hone in on return on investment is in the way we reduce claims. You reduce accidents therefore you reduce the bottom line. That said, we keep the driver safer and help the driver to improve. Some companies even position us as a benefit program.

### PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

- **Vincent Taormina** has been appointed to the Clean Energy Fuels Corp. board of directors. He is the former Chief Executive Officer of California-based Taormina Industries Inc. When that company merged with Republic Services in 1997, Taormina served as regional vice president of Republic Services from 1997 to 2001.

- **Steve Yolitz** has been hired by Heil Environmental as director of marketing. He is responsible for the leading refuse and recycling vehicle manufacturer's entire integrated marketing strategies and actions, overseeing the company's marketing and product management teams.

- **Tammy Wilson** and **David Shepler** were promoted to district managers at Advanced Disposal Services Inc (ADS). Wilson began her career with ADS in 2001 as sales manager in the Jacksonville, Fla., area. Wilson will oversee the entire Jacksonville commercial operation, as well as the residential operations in Clay and St. John's counties. Shepler brings more than 15 years' experience in the waste management industry to his role as district manager. Shepler will be responsible for multiple operating locations in north Florida and south Georgia, including Jacksonville residential services and three landfills.

- **Joel Lanz** has been promoted to president of Landfill Service Corp., which provides alternative daily cover and landfill gas products. Lanz has been with the company for 17 years.

**CORRECTION.** Landfill alternatives do not produce methane, according to Center for a Competitive Waste Industry Executive Director Peter Anderson. See *Interview: LFG Contributes to Warming; Alternatives to Landfills Needed Now (SWR, March 28)*.