

Chronology of Defect

In July 2024, McNeilus received a report from a fleet customer that the side loader arm on one of its refuse trucks had drifted away from the body of the truck while being driven. McNeilus attempted to replicate the customer's report including installing a recording device on the underside of the truck. Resulting video from August 2024 captured the retaining latch for the arm not being held in place and lifting upwards, allowing the arm to creep away from the truck body. Further investigation and analysis revealed leaking hydraulic fluid in the cylinder for the control arm which reduced the pressure on the arm, allowing the latch to move and not remain secured in place and the arm to move away from the body.

The truck involved in the 2024 event did not include a locking nub feature located at the end of the latch. This nub served as an extension of the latch and was designed to restrict the movement of the arm; the nub is to catch onto a locking mechanism to prevent the arm from moving away from the body of the truck. The nub had been removed from production in 2020 following reports that customers were unable to unlatch the side loader arm therefore making the refuse truck inoperable and putting it in an out of service status. If the side loader arm started to creep away from the body (1/4 inch or less) the latch restricting the arm's movement could become stuck and proximity sensors were incorrectly detecting the arm in a fully stowed position which rendered the arm unusable and putting the truck out of service. Prior to 2020, vehicles had the nub included in the latch design, but McNeilus became aware of informal reports of customers modifying their trucks to grind off the nub to prevent the truck from being put in an out of service state. While the customer reports McNeilus received about the side loader arm prior to the 2020 redesign of the latch were related to the service status of the truck, post-2020 McNeilus received a small number of unverified reports of the side loader arms drifting away from the truck body. Of these events and prior to August 2024, McNeilus had not been able to replicate the concern on customer vehicles and it was believed that any issue with the performance of the side loader arm was due to the operator commanding the arm to extend.

On August 19, 2024, McNeilus decided to conduct a safety recall to address this issue, including vehicles produced prior to 2020 which includes vehicles that the owner may have modified to remove the latch nub. McNeilus is aware of 10-12 complaints that are potentially related to this issue and 1 unverified instance of property damage that may be related to this issue.