

SAFETY ALERT

ACWA/Joint Powers Insurance Authority, 5620 Birdcage Street, Suite 200, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7632, (800) 231-5742

Recently, a 2003 Sterling Vac-Con Truck (see attached photo) operated by one of ACWA/JPIA's members caught fire during a vacuum operation. The fire was apparently caused when a hydraulic hose used to run the fan assembly came loose and dumped flammable hydraulic fluid onto the vehicle's hot exhaust system. The fire originated behind the cab and spread into the cab assembly. The truck, valued at \$145,000, was a total loss.

The loss described above may have been an isolated case, but preventing the recurrence of a similar loss should be greatly beneficial to your agency and the ACWA/JPIA membership. While there may be some dissimilarities between this vehicle and the Vac-Con/Vactor systems your agency operates, it would still be prudent to:

- a. Conduct a one-time focused inspection the hydraulic hoses and fittings of all similar vehicles. Particular attention should be placed to the hoses and connections in areas where failure could introduce hydraulic fluid to conditions that could cause combustion (heat, spark, flame).
- b. If not already called for in the operation or maintenance instructions associated with your equipment, periodically check the integrity of hydraulic hose connections.

Should you find a problem with the hydraulic systems on your equipment, please advise ACWA/JPIA Risk Management of the conditions discovered. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact ACWA/JPIA at (800)-231-5742.

2003 Sterling Vac-Con Truck

