



**Sanitation Local 831
Testimony**

NYC Council Hearing

April 6, 2026

Testimony of Dennis Schock

**President, Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association,
Local 831**

**New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
Oversight – City 2025-2026 Solid Waste Management Plan**

Council Member Justin Sanchez

Chair

April 6, 2026

Good afternoon, Chair Sanchez and to the other members of the Committee and thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

My name is Dennis Schock and I am the President of the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association, Local 831, and I look forward to working with you all.

I am here today to ask the City Council for its help addressing deeply rooted and chronic problems with critically needed renovations and maintenance to our garages, repairs to hundreds of aging trucks and other equipment, and cuts to essential training programs.

As this committee knows, our members work very hard. But our mission of collecting, recycling, disposing of waste, cleaning city streets and vacant lots, and clearing snow and ice is seriously compromised without proper attention and funding being paid to the resources we need to do that work.

The New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) operates one of the largest municipal fleets in the country, responsible for collecting 24 million pounds of waste daily and maintaining street cleanliness citywide.

Many of our garages and facilities are in urgent need of repair, renovations, and some are unsafe and close to being condemned. Indeed, I had our business agents put together a list of nearly 20 garages, across all 5 boroughs, in need of major repair and renovation.

Garages and Facilities in Need of Repair/Renovation or Should be Condemned

- Staten Island Garage 01, 539 Jersey Street
- Brooklyn South Garage 13, 2012 Neptune Avenue
- Brooklyn North Garage 09, 690 New York Avenue
- Manhattan Garage 03, Pier 36 South Street
- Manhattan Garage 06, Pier 36
- Manhattan Garage 08, 4036 9th Avenue

- Bronx Garage 09 and 10, 850 Zerega Avenue
- Bronx Garage 11, 800 Zerega Avenue
- Bronx Garage 07, 2383 Blackrock Avenue
- Bronx Garage 08, 800 East 176th Street
- Queens West Garage 01, 34-28 21st Street
- Queens West Garage 06, 58-73 53rd Avenue
- Queens East Garage 11, 75-05 Winchester Avenue
- Queens East Garage 13A, 153-67 146th Avenue

In addition, DSNY's current fleet performance demonstrates critical failure rates across multiple essential vehicle types, significantly impacting daily operations, worker efficiency, and public sanitation conditions.

NYC Sanitation Fleet Failure Report & Operational Impact

Our out-of-service numbers shows that nearly 1 in 3 trucks are unavailable in key categories – this is well below operational expectations and indicative of systemic maintenance and repair delays. Specifically:

- 28.4 percent of collection rear loaders out of service
- 30.6 percent of dual bin collection trucks out of service
- 28.4 percent of street sweepers out of service
- 22.5 percent of roll-on roll-off trucks out of service

The result is routes are overloaded and collections are delayed, and sanitation workers, who are forced to double or triple work output, experience an increased risk of injury and fatigue.

When older trucks are pushed harder and longer, breakdowns occur more frequently. Delays in repairs lead to work inefficiencies and increased costs, not to mention worse service output. In short, nearly one-third of critical vehicles are down, and core services are severely compromised.

NYC Sanitation Fleet Aging Report – Over 8 Years Old

We rely heavily upon a large fleet of collection vehicles to maintain daily operations across the city. Industry standards and city guidance dictate that collection trucks have an optimal service life of approximately 8 years, after which maintenance costs and breakdown rates increase significantly. Operating these vehicles beyond this lifecycle leads to reduced liability, increased downtime and declining service efficiency.

A significant portion – 1 out of 3 rear loaders and over 4 out of 10 split body trucks have surpassed the recommended 8-year replacement cycle. Specifically:

- 29.1 percent of rear loader trucks are aged out
- 41 percent of split-body trucks are aged out

This also directly impacts collection delays, worker productivity, snow removal, and operational delays. Since a substantial portion of NYC's sanitation fleet is operating beyond its lifespan, we are finding increased breakdowns, lower fleet availability, and higher repair costs.

To maintain operational effectiveness and public service standards, the department needs to accelerate fleet replacement cycles, increase capital investment in new vehicles and equipment. Failure to do so will continue to degrade service performance, increase costs and strain our workforce.

Widespread Failure of Bayne Tippers and Unacceptable Repair Delays

There is also widespread failure and repair delays to our fleet of Bayne tippers. Bayne tippers are the hydraulic cart lifters, which automatically lift cans and dump them into the trucks. Currently, 30 percent of these units are non-operational. This level of equipment failure is unacceptable and reflects a breakdown in both maintenance oversight and response time.

These numbers do not address the malfunctioning units that, despite mechanical defects, are forced into service thereby forcing sanitation workers to manually lift heavy loads and risking preventable injuries to our workforce.

Snow Removal

DSNY relies on a highly specialized fleet of snow fighting equipment to maintain safe and passable roadways during winter storms. The operations are critical as DSNY is responsible for clearing approximately 19,000 lane-miles of city streets and ensuring mobility for emergency services, public transportation and daily commerce.

This task would be extremely difficult under ideal conditions with all snow fighting equipment functioning at maximum capacity. But we are not, and much of our equipment is down or out of service. Specifically:

- 7.1 percent of salt spreaders are out of service
- 19.3 percent of haulsters are out of service
- 40.7 percent of front-end loaders are out of service
- 5.5 percent of flow and dump units are out of service

All of this equipment is crucial to snow fighting. Salt spreaders are the first line of defense in any snow operation, deployed at the initial sign of frozen precipitation to prevent ice from bonding to street surfaces.

Haulsters are essential for servicing narrow residential streets and hard-to-reach areas where larger plow trucks cannot operate. With over 19 percent of them down, it limits our ability to maintain secondary and tertiary routes, delaying full citywide snow removal.

Front-end loaders play a critical post-storm role by removing accumulated snow and loading into melters or transport units and supporting salting operations. With over 40 percent of these units out of service the Department faces significant delays in snow removal, pile reduction and overall storm recovery operations.

Flow and dump units are responsible for hauling snow and supporting large-scale removal operations. While the percentage of the down is small, any reduction impact the efficiency of our clearing work.

DSNY's snow response depends on a coordinated approach of salting, plowing and hauling, but the current level of equipment downtime presents several operational risks:

- reduced coverage of residential and narrow streets due to haulster shortages;
- severe backlog of snow removal operations caused by the high number of front-end loaders out of service;
- extended recovery periods following major storms, impacting traffic flow and emergency response.

The current number of inoperable snow vehicles significantly weakens DSNY's ability to execute timely and effective snow operations. Given the scale and complexity of NYC's snow response, maintaining a fully operational fleet is critical. Immediate attention must be paid to fleet maintenance, repair timelines, and replacement planning is essential to ensure the City remains fully prepared for winter weather events.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address this committee today.

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Dennis Schock
President
Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association, Local 831

Widespread Failure of Bayne Tippers and Unacceptable Repair Delays

Overview:

This report documents a serious and ongoing failure in the maintenance and repair of Bayne tippers installed on sanitation collection trucks. At present, approximately 30% of these units are non-operational. This level of equipment failure is unacceptable and reflects a breakdown in both maintenance oversight and response time.

Findings:

Nearly one-third of all Bayne tippers are out of service due to unresolved mechanical, hydraulic, and electrical issues.

Known defects include:

Complete hydraulic failure preventing lifting operations

Severely worn or broken structural components

Malfunctioning controls rendering units unusable

Despite these known issues, trucks are still being deployed with defective tippers, forcing sanitation workers to manually lift heavy loads.

Safety Concerns:

Workers are being exposed to serious and preventable injury risks, including back injuries, strains, and long-term physical damage.

The continued use of defective equipment demonstrates a disregard for basic safety standards and worker well-being.

Repair Failures:

Repair turnaround times are excessively long and do not meet operational needs.

There is a clear backlog of unresolved repairs, with no sense of urgency in addressing critical equipment failures.

Trucks remain in service for extended periods with known defects, indicating a failure in accountability and maintenance management.

Operational Impact:

Collection routes are significantly delayed due to non-functional equipment.

Productivity has decreased, placing additional pressure on workers to compensate for faulty machinery.

The current situation is creating avoidable inefficiencies and increasing long-term costs due to neglected repairs.

Conclusion:

The fact that 30% of Bayne tippers are non-functional, combined with prolonged repair delays, represents a serious operational and safety failure. Immediate corrective action is required. The continued deployment of defective equipment is unacceptable and places both workers and overall operations at risk.