



Four Republic Services Employees Named Industry's Best at 2026 National Waste & Recycling Association's Awards Gala

June 15, 2026 12:20 PM EDT

National Waste & Recycling Association recognized two company drivers, an operator and a technician for outstanding safety, performance and service

PHOENIX, June 15, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Four employees of Republic Services, Inc. (NYSE: RSG) subsidiaries were recognized by the National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) as the industry's best during the NWRA's 2026 Annual Awards Gala on June 10 in Washington, D.C. They were honored for their outstanding performance records and contributions that enhanced overall safety and strengthened the image of the waste and recycling industry.

Dave Bombei of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was named the NWRA Technician of the Year; Ausencio Carrera of Houston, Texas, was named the NWRA National Safety-Sensitive Driver of the Year; Kenny Gallegos of Phoenix, Arizona, was named the NWRA Operator of the Year; and Donato "Tito" Ponce, also of Phoenix, Arizona, was named the NWRA National Roll-Off Driver of the Year.

In honor of their NWRA recognition, Republic Services leaders presented Carrera and Ponce with keys to new company trucks personalized with their names and 2026 NWRA honors displayed on the side. Bombei also received a new maintenance truck, along with customized tools recognizing his achievement. Gallegos, a heavy equipment operator who recently retired after 33 years with the company, was recognized at his local site alongside peers to mark his achievement.

"Our frontline employees bring technical expertise and a safety mindset to their work every day," said Jon Vander Ark, president and chief executive officer. "Tito, Kenny, Ausencio and Dave represent the best-of-the-best of our team, and we congratulate them on their well-deserved recognition and unwavering commitment to safety."

The NWRA Driver and Operator of the Year awards recognize member drivers, heavy equipment operators and technicians who work safely and responsibly, maintain outstanding performance records and enhance the safety and public image of the recycling and waste industry.

Since 2006, Republic Services employees have consistently earned recognition across multiple NWRA award categories, highlighting the company's commitment to safety and operational excellence.

2026 Driver of the Year – Roll-Off: Donato "Tito" Ponce

Tito Ponce is a roll-off driver with more than 31 years of service, primarily supporting operations at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. He has maintained an exceptional safety record with no preventable incidents or injuries in one of the most complex, high-security operating environments in the country. Ponce is a trusted resource for colleagues and is actively involved in his community.

2026 Driver of the Year – Safety-Sensitive: Ausencio Carrera

With 27 years in the recycling and waste industry, Ausencio Carrera began his career as a helper and advanced through multiple roles to become a residential driver in Houston. His dedication and reliability, combined with deep industry knowledge and hands-on experience, have earned him lasting relationships with both customers and coworkers. Carrera takes pride in his work, supports his team and enjoys time with his family outside of work.

2026 Operator of the Year: Kenny Gallegos

Kenny Gallegos dedicated 33 years to Republic Services, supporting landfill and transfer station operations across Arizona as a heavy equipment operator. Known for his reliability, he consistently supported site operations, emergency response efforts and team training. He was a trusted resource for both teammates and leadership, taking pride in maintaining safe, well-run sites and fostering a strong team culture. Since retiring in May, Kenny is enjoying more time with his family.

2026 Technician of the Year: Dave Bombei

With more than 38-years in the industry, Dave Bombei supports preventative maintenance and emergency repair operations across multiple recycling facilities in Iowa. Throughout his career, he has maintained an exceptional safety record with no preventable incidents or injuries. His commitment to safety, team development and customer support has made him a trusted resource for colleagues. Outside of work, Dave values time with his wife of 37 years, his children and grandchildren, and enjoys spending time outdoors.

About Republic Services

Republic Services, Inc. is a leader in the environmental services industry. Through its subsidiaries, the company provides customers with the most complete set of products and services, including recycling, solid waste, special waste, hazardous waste and field services. Republic's industry-leading commitments to advance circularity and support decarbonization are helping deliver on its vision to partner with customers to create a more sustainable world. For more information, please visit [RepublicServices.com](https://www.RepublicServices.com).

Republic Services Media Relations
Media@RepublicServices.com
(480) 757-9770



Sustainability in Action

 View original content to download multimedia:<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/four-republic-services-employees-named-industrys-best-at-2026-national-waste--recycling-associations-awards-gala-302800280.html>

SOURCE Republic Services, Inc.