

Former drivers sue Casella, saying the company did not pay them for overtime

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Casella Waste Systems / Flickr

Three former drivers for Casella Waste Systems are suing the Rutland-based company, alleging Casella did not pay them for routine overtime hours. Casella has asked a federal judge to dismiss the case.

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In the lawsuit, which was filed in federal court last August, the plaintiffs say Casella automatically deducted a 30-minute meal break from drivers' pay, though the plaintiffs say they routinely work through that break. The plaintiffs also say they were required to perform vehicle inspections before and after each trip,

but were not compensated for that time. The lawsuit argues those practices violated state and federal labor laws.

Lawyers for the three plaintiffs are seeking to make the case a class action suit, which would cover all current and former drivers who worked for the waste management giant beginning in August 2018.

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Casella has asked Judge Christina Reiss to dismiss the case. Among the company's arguments: that plaintiffs failed to offer sufficient detail in their complaint, falling short of what's needed to bring a claim under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. Judge Reiss has not yet ruled on Casella's motion.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs and Casella did not immediately respond to VPR's requests for comment. A Casella spokesperson did not respond to a voicemail and email from VPR.

The plaintiffs are three former waste disposal drivers who worked for the company in Vermont, Maine and Massachusetts between 2018 and 2021. The suit alleges Casella violated labor laws in all three of those states, in addition to federal violations. The plaintiffs are seeking unpaid wages, damages and attorneys' fees.

Casella is a major regional player in the Northeast's waste management system, with operations in most New England states, as well as New York and Pennsylvania. It collects trash, recycling and compost,

and owns transfer stations, recycling facilities and landfills, including the only open landfill in Vermont. Casella is publicly traded on the Nasdaq exchange. The company reported total revenues of \$774 million in 2020. It's due to report its latest earnings after markets close on Thursday.

Disclosure: Casella is a VPR underwriter.

Have questions, comments or tips? Send us a message or get in touch with reporter Henry Epp @TheHenryEpp.