

THE CORPORATION OF THE UNITED TOWNSHIPS OF HEAD, CLARA & MARIA



HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES MUNICIPAL MAINTENANCE WORKER

INTRODUCTION

As Waste Collector and Disposal Site Attendant, the work can be extremely hazardous.

Injuries from cuts, back strain and toxic substances are just a few of the dangers the employee faces every day on the job. Avoiding injury means getting the proper training, familiarizing the employee with the hazards, learning about the ways in which the individual can protect themselves and putting it all into practice.

In all instances the individual works alone. Applying the following principles and following these procedures will ensure employee safety and provide a safe and healthy workplace. It is the employee's responsibility to know these procedures and to follow them.

Each employee has a positive obligation to help create and maintain a healthy and safe workplace. To do so, the employee must:

- take responsibility for accident prevention on the job;
- monitor the health and safety practices of fellow employees and contractors;
- report work-related accidents as soon as becoming aware of them;
- investigate accidents immediately and completely, and take steps to ensure that they do not happen again;
- ensure that fellow employees and contractors wear properly maintained safety-related equipment and clothing, if applicable;
- advise fellow employees of any health and safety dangers and the necessary precautions.

For a complete list of worker responsibilities, refer to the Municipal Health and Safety Policy – P&P1001.

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS – specific to disposal sites and waste collection

1. The collection vehicle including: cab entry steps, rear entry steps and confinement of the cargo container.
2. Solid waste including kitchen/food waste, bottles and cans, liquids, furniture and hazardous materials that may be placed within containers.
3. Refuse containers which hide contents. Waste comes packaged in all types of containers – bags, boxes, wooden crates, pails, cans, baskets. In most cases, the employee does not know what is inside these containers.
4. Sharp objects – before the employee picks up any bag, attempt to determine if it contains sharp objects like broken glass or jagged materials. Uncapped hypodermic needles improperly disposed of are becoming more common.
5. Fluorescent Tubes – fluorescent lights are fragile and potentially explosive. When broken suddenly, they explode, sending fragments of glass powder in all directions. Other objects with similar explosive qualities are television picture tubes, pressurized containers or canisters.

6. Toxic and Hazardous Materials – acids, chemicals, pesticides or soiled cloths used for cleaning. Mixtures of these substances in the load may form a chemical reaction that could be very dangerous. Discarded car batteries, paint thinners and cleaning solvents are other examples of dangerous chemical hazards. Use caution when applying bleach to the vehicle bed during cleaning. Bleach mixed with other chemicals could be lethal.
7. Bending/lifting – On the job the employee lifts a variety of objects of differing shapes and sizes. Some can put undue strain on the employee's back if not prepared. The majority of back injuries are caused by improper lifting techniques or by attempting to lift something that is too heavy. Make sure to lift with your legs, not your back. If it is too heavy, ask for assistance or leave it there.
8. Pinch points – include vehicle doors, garbage can handles or access doors.
9. Weather Conditions – in some areas, icicles can form on power lines and poles. Be aware of these when collecting near lines and poles.
10. Dogs or other animals – Occasionally the employee might come across dangerous dogs. Keep clear of the animal, if it is threatening, leave the garbage, note the house number and advise office staff. Office staff will let the homeowner know why their waste was not collected.
 - a. Bites, no matter how small, from any animal must be taken seriously. Seek medical attention immediately and notify office staff.
 - b. Although electric fences have been installed to minimize the occurrence of bears at the disposal sites, there is a possibility that the employee may encounter bears at the sites or along the route. Use all safety precautions and avoid the bear at all costs.
 - c. If it is unsafe to unload the back of the truck due to animals on the scene – don't do it. Arrange for another individual to attend at the site with you to monitor the situation and ensure safety.
11. Driving conditions – any hazard can be more dangerous during snow or fog. Extreme caution must be used when visibility is reduced.
12. Working Alone – any injury might not be noticed for some time due to the fact that the employee works independently and at times when no other employee is available. It is the employee's duty to ensure that they follow safety procedures to ensure personal safety.

PROCEDURES

1. Personal Protective Equipment – wearing the proper personal protective clothing and equipment on the job can help to protect employee eyes, hands, head and feet from injury.
 - a. Gloves and coveralls are provided – use them while collecting material, cleaning the vehicle and maintaining the sites.
 - b. The employee is to wear CSA approved safety footwear with steel shank and toe, especially while working at the disposal sites.
 - c. The operation of municipal sites does not require the use of a hardhat or other protective headgear until and unless the contractor is on site with heavy equipment.

2. Driving Municipal Vehicles (or personal vehicle while on Municipal business) – when the vehicle is in motion the employee must wear the seat belt at all times and in a proper fashion, even when travelling short distances.
 - a. Do not operate the vehicle until and unless all passengers (if any) have seat belts fastened.
 - b. When leaving the vehicle, make sure that it is properly immobilized and the vehicle engine has been turned off.
 - c. When stepping out, check for uneven road surfaces, debris scattered on the road and/or slippery surfaces.
 - d. If the vehicle has adjustable steps on the rear, they should be in the raised position at all times when not being used for access to the truck bed.
 - e. Prior to operating any municipal vehicle a circle check must be completed.
3. Reversing the vehicle – Before reversing the vehicle, the employee must first make sure it can be completed safely by doing a circle check. If backing up is necessary, the employee is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle path is clear. Always reverse at a walking pace, especially in areas with high traffic or pedestrians. If possible, avoid backing up.
4. Handling Traffic – Always look before entering any roadway. Cars, trucks, bicycles, children may be hidden behind obstructions. Remember, the majority of motorists are in a hurry and may not yield the right of way to the municipal vehicle. For personal safety, wearing a reflective fluorescent vest with tear away straps over other clothing will increase the chance of being seen at all times.
5. Lifting – Before lifting any object, keep in mind that it might be heavier than it looks. Judge the weight of the bag or container by rocking it with your hand. Tip the load slightly or lift gently. A heavy container will fall out of your hands.
 - a. If the load is too heavy, get help or leave it there. Note the location, contact the office and office staff will advise the resident why the material was not collected. Alternately, leave a notice at the site.
 - b. Never lift heavy and bulky items like furniture or brush etc. unless it is properly tied and the load can be controlled. Don't attempt to lift more than can be handled alone.
 - c. Bend knees, leaving back straight while lifting. Stand close to the load with feet apart for good balance. Use a good grip, gradually straighten knees as you stand, keeping the load as close to the body as can be safely done. When turning with a load, never twist the body – move feet instead.
6. Refuse Collection – Avoid reaching over anything to reach for refuse. If you have to reach into a container, stand as close to the container as possible without touching it. As much as possible, use legs and not your back to lift the garbage to avoid putting extra strain on your back. Back and shoulder problems can be prevented by never attempting to carry too much at one time.
 - a. When lifting garbage, avoid carrying it in front of your face where it can block your line of vision.
 - b. Avoid coming into direct contact with garbage bags by carrying them slightly away from the body. Upon reaching the truck, place the garbage on the tailgate and then push it into the truck bed. Lighter items can be thrown to the back and on top. Attempt to distribute the weight inside the truck bed evenly, especially in adverse weather conditions.
 - c. Leave any materials that might be considered toxic or hazardous as they are not to be accepted at our disposal site but saved for special waste collection (i.e. car batteries, paints, solvents, acids, thinners, etc). Note the location, notify the office and office staff will contact the resident.

7. Maintenance – steps should be constantly inspected for any build up of ice, grease etc. and kept free of any slipping hazards. Report any damaged steps and have worn step surfaces repaired.
 - a. Each worker is to perform safety inspections in their areas of responsibility on a regular basis and report deficiencies to your supervisor or Health and Safety representative.
 - b. Fire extinguishers and first aid kits are to be available in the Municipal vehicle and inspected monthly.

8. Working alone – although your responsibility is to refuse accepting certain types of waste material at the disposal sites and to refuse material from individuals from outside our municipality, do not place yourself in harms way by engaging a confrontational individual. Simply record as many details after the fact and complete an incident report.
 - a. Should the situation warrant, call the OPP. Report all incidents to your supervisor immediately.
 - b. A cell phone is available for employee use for emergency situations. Should you find that this device is ineffective and inefficient advise your supervisor so that we may determine an acceptable solution.

If you have any doubts about any situation – talk to your supervisor before proceeding. Learn how to work and stay safe. Remember, it is your duty to report any accident or incident within the scope of your position. We can not take corrective measures if we are not aware of the hazard.