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| <b>Title:</b>         | Communication Policy |
| <b>Adopted on:</b>    | June 28, 2024        |
| <b>Adopted by:</b>    | City Manager         |
| <b>Jurisdiction:</b>  | Safety Coordinator   |
| <b>Revision Date:</b> | June 28, 2024        |

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## **1. PURPOSE**

Internal Communication ensures that employees at each level and function are aware of relevant information. Examples of information to be communicated internally include policies, procedures, inspection results, identified safety and health hazards, incidents and non-conformances, changes in workplace safety, and others. The method of communication can be formal (meetings, postings) or informal (discussions).

The Occupational Health Committee (OHC) plays a vital role in facilitating communication regarding safety and health issues between employees and the City. While employees are encouraged to report safety issues immediately to their supervisor, the OHC serves as an additional avenue for addressing concerns and providing input into all activities and procedures that affect operations.

External Communications may occur with employees designated by senior management to communicate with relevant stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety and the Workers Compensation Board.

## **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all managers, supervisors, employees, and contractors.

## **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Senior Management, Managers, Supervisors and Employees**

Supervisors at all levels, (including Senior Managers and Managers), are expected to inform employees of the hazards to which they may be exposed based on the job function or task being performed. The type and format of communication will vary based on the level of responsibility. As a minimum, the following is expected of each of the levels listed below:

#### **Senior Management**

Senior Managers must meet at least twice annually with their team (this would typically include Directors, Managers, Superintendents and in some cases, Supervisors where no Manager may be in place). This meeting is to be dedicated solely to safety-related issues and is intended to update the management team on the status of departmental objectives as well as to discuss areas of OHS concern within the division. These meetings, which are considered a key performance area for the department, must be documented and the information forwarded to the Safety Coordinator.

#### **Managers and Supervisors**

Managers and Supervisors must communicate regularly with employees to ensure expectations are clear and that controls required to reduce risk are understood and implemented. Controls include engineering modifications, administrative adjustments, training and education, personal protective equipment and safe work practices and procedures.

While the level of communication is dependent on several factors, the primary purpose of communication between a supervisor (including a manager) and an employee is to ensure that the employee is familiar with the hazards, knows what controls need to be implemented to perform the job or task safely and has the necessary tools and equipment (including personal protective equipment) to do so.

The most common tool utilized to facilitate this communication is the hazard assessment which can be used as a basis for a discussion or “toolbox talk” related to precautions to be taken while performing the job or task. Toolbox talks should also reference past incidents related to the task being performed as well as any observations or findings from inspections that the supervisor may be aware of. The OHC and representatives are also encouraged to participate in toolbox talks where appropriate for the task.

### **Employees**

In addition to the requirement to report incidents, all employees are expected to communicate safety issues and concerns to the supervisor in addition to their co-workers or anyone who may be affected by their undertaking. Safety issues and concerns must be communicated to their respective OHC members or Representative.

It is expected that prior to performing a task, employees voice any concerns or suggestions, particularly when a hazard assessment is being reviewed by the supervisor or during a toolbox talk. It is only through discussing hazards openly that the best approach can be taken to minimize the risk associated with a particular hazard.

### **Contractors**

Contractors have a responsibility to communicate hazard information to the appropriate stakeholders and report incidents when they happen. Similarly, project managers have a responsibility to communicate safety expectations in pre-job meetings and in the review of site safety plans that contractors are required to submit.

Contractors must communicate hazards and appropriate controls to their workers and inform the City representative overseeing the contract of issues and concerns that arise during the project or service. Hazard reports, incident reports, site specific safety plans, training records, person in charge, etc. are examples of information which must be communicated to the City representative.

## **4. PROCEDURE**

All policies and procedures shall be written and incorporated into the OHS Manual and distributed to members of management, who shall:

- a) Familiarize themselves with the contents of the OHS program;
- b) Verbally communicate applicable rights and responsibilities with their employees; and
- c) Make the manual available to all managers, supervisors, employees, and contractors.

The City of Weyburn uses various methods for communicating Safety across the organization. This communication is both formal and informal, scheduled and routine, and in response to various emergencies, incidents that have occurred, or in direct response to a risk. Health and safety communication shall be conducted through but is not limited to the following media:

- COW HERD
- SiteDocs

- Voyent Alert
- Notices with Paystubs
- Occupational Health and Safety Communication Boards
- Meetings
- Safety Talks, Toolbox Meetings and General Meetings
- Hazard Assessments
- Safety Alerts/Bulletins
- Safe Work Practices & Procedures
- Training Programs

#### **4.1 COW HERD (Intranet)**

A primary source of communication for the City is the Intranet Site, COW HERD, which houses information on the City's Occupational Health and Safety Management System such as policies, safe work practices and procedures, OHC Committee information including meeting minutes and committee make-up and emergency response plans. COW HERD will also be utilized to inform employees of upcoming events and important information.

#### **4.2 SiteDocs**

The SiteDocs platform, is used to input information on toolbox meetings, hazard assessments, inspections, investigations and other programs within the Safety Management System. This platform is also used to provide the most current version of Policies, Safe Work Practices and Procedures, Safety Data Sheets and as such is the primary tool utilized for OHS document control. SiteDocs also houses information to be communicated for corrective actions required due to inspections, investigations, etc.

#### **4.3 Voyent Alert**

Internal communication regarding urgent matters, such as safety alerts or emergency notifications, will be disseminated through the Voyent Alert system. *(\*to be implemented in 2025)*

#### **4.4 Notices within Paystubs**

Pertinent information, reminders, or updates may be included within employees' paystubs to ensure widespread awareness.

#### **4.5 Occupational Health Committee (OHC) Boards**

Important safety information and updates will be posted on Occupational Health Committee boards located in prominent, designated areas for easy access by employees. Health and Safety Boards include information pertaining to:

- copies of safety legislation
- Occupational Health Committee member or representative information
- safety and harassment policies
- copies of any compliance undertakings, notice of contraventions or progress reports
- emergency contacts, procedures and those trained in first aid
- health and safety resources
- workplace inspections

**4.6 Safety Talks, Toolbox meetings and General Safety Meetings**

The purpose of these meetings is to provide information, instruction, and supervision to a worker to protect the health and safety of a worker. They also act as a means for workers to participate in their personal safety. Safety talks, toolbox meetings and general safety meetings are documented with employees' signatures, dates, and the name of the person conducting the safety talk.

Public Works and Parks Supervisors will conduct weekly safety talks and daily toolbox meetings with all employees under their control. Water Treatment Plant Supervisors will conduct daily toolbox talks. Such meetings will be held during normal work time and can be approximately 10-15 minutes in duration. Regular toolbox meetings are to be conducted daily before work commences or as the scope of work changes. Additionally, general safety meetings will be held according to the schedule detailed in Section 6.

**4.7 Hazard Assessments:**

Hazard Assessments must be completed prior to the start of any new work or the start of every work shift. In addition, they must also be done on an ongoing basis to include instances where there are changes to the process or environment, or if a new hazard is introduced/identified during the work process – or any other significant change to the original job plan. The Hazard Assessment form on SiteDocs will be used for ongoing assessments.

Hazard Assessments are to be completed with the involvement of all applicable workers on the job site including Project Managers, Superintendents, Supervisors, Workers and Sub-contractors (when applicable). Each individual must sign a copy of the hazard assessment as documentation that the hazards have been discussed and all parties are aware of how to control or mitigate them. If a new hazard is identified or introduced, the Supervisor will immediately stop the work and implement control measures to eliminate or reduce the hazard. The work will not re-start until all workers have been made aware of the hazards and are instructed on the control measures.

**4.8 Safety Talks/Newsletters:**

At the beginning of each month the Safety Coordinator will issue a safety message to all employees on OHS topics that are relevant to the work being completed by our employees. Examples include Safe Winter Driving, Fire Safety during Fire Prevention Week and Workplace Safety during North American Occupational Safety and Health Week. These monthly messages will also be considered a key performance indicator for the department and posted to the COW HERD Intranet Site.

**4.9 Safety Alerts/Bulletins:**

In addition to regular scheduled communications as referenced above, the Safety Coordinator from time to time will issue communications to all employees on safety related matters that may be time sensitive or require immediate dissemination. Examples include updates on serious incidents or near misses, significant events which may have direct impact on safety programming and structural or resource changes which may impact how employees are supported from an OHS perspective.

**4.10 Safe Work Practices & Procedures:**

Safe Work Practices (SWPs) offer general information related to the protection of worker health and safety by offering reminders, actions, and tips for dealing with certain work situations. SWPs list (in no

specific order) the responsibilities of both supervisors and workers, provide an explanation on selection and use of the SWP and the various protective mechanisms that relate to that practice.

Safe Job Procedures offer specific step-by-step work instructions involving specific job tasks or operational activities. SJPs list:

- The Tools and Equipment Required
- The Material Required
- The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Detailed job steps

Worker input in the development and review of SWPs & SJPs is an important part of the health and safety management system. Both workers and management shall participate in the development and review of Safe Work Practices & Procedures. Workers can and should contribute their knowledge and experience in outlining SWPs & SJPs.

#### **4.11 Training Programs**

Training is an essential component to employee, personal, and skill development. It is also instrumental in preventing incidents, injuries, illness and property damage. When employees have the skills to perform the work tasks properly, the awareness of hazards, and the knowledge of the potential risk – they are equipped to perform the job safely.

#### **4.12 Participation in Safety Communication**

Safety communication is most effective when it is “two-way” – from management to workers and from workers to management. Participation of Senior Management in safety communications – including Safety meetings, Safety Training Sessions, Annual General Meetings, etc. is crucial to successful communication. Management participation in safety talks, safety meetings, and communicating with crews during worksite inspections is strongly encouraged.

#### **4.13 Reporting to Provincial Authorities**

Prior to reporting to any provincial authority, the Safety Coordinator must be consulted, and where applicable, the Safety Coordinator will file the report. In Saskatchewan, the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020, Sections 2-2 and 2-3 come into effect on a worksite whenever there is a serious injury or an incident that has the potential to cause a serious injury. The contractor or employer responsible for the work site must notify the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Division of The Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety (LRWS) as soon as reasonably possible.

If a person is killed or required to be admitted to a hospital as an in-patient for a period of 72 hours or more, or a dangerous occurrence, the City must immediately notify the Ministry of Labour and Workplace Relations, OHC Members or Representative and union (as applicable) by telephone or other direct means. The employer must provide a written report of the circumstances surrounding the incident to a Director within 48 hours of the incident.

If a person is unable to perform their regular work activities or requires medical attention because of a workplace incident (including explosion, fire and violence), the employer must provide a written report of the circumstances surrounding the incident to the OHC Members or Representative, union (if applicable) and a Director (if required by an inspector) within four days of the incident.

If advised by or on behalf of a worker or former worker that the worker has an occupational illness or that a claim in respect of an occupational illness has been filed with the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) by or on behalf of the worker, the employer must provide a written report containing any prescribed information to the OHC Members or Representative, union (if applicable) and a Director within four days of being advised.

#### **4.14 Media**

Communication with the media will be in accordance with the *Media Relations Policy*.

### **5. MONTHLY SAFETY MEETINGS AGENDA**

The individual tasked with conducting monthly safety meetings must ensure the following agenda items are addressed:

#### **5.1 Review of Previous Meeting Minutes:**

- Provide a recap of the minutes from the previous meeting, highlighting any concerns raised and their current status.

#### **5.2 Incident Review and Corrective Actions:**

- Conduct a thorough review of accidents/incidents reported since the last meeting.
- Discuss the status of recommended corrective actions and any measures taken to address identified issues.

#### **5.3 Inspection Update:**

- Review the outcomes of planned inspections conducted since the last meeting.
- Discuss the status of corrective actions resulting from inspection findings.

#### **5.4 Site-Specific Hazards and Identifications:**

- Address any site-specific hazards or hazard identifications brought forward by employees or identified through inspections.

#### **5.5 Worker Input and Concerns:**

- Encourage workers to voice their comments and concerns regarding safety matters.
- Provide a platform for open dialogue to address any issues raised by employees.

#### **5.6 Presentation of Safety Topic:**

- Deliver a presentation on the designated safety topic for the meeting.
- Provide relevant information, best practices, and guidelines to enhance safety awareness and practices.

### **6. SAFETY MEETING SCHEDULE**

The frequency of safety meetings varies according to department and is as follows:

- Works: Monthly
- Water Treatment Plant: Monthly
- Parks: Monthly
- Facilities: Bi-Monthly (every 2 months)
- Spark Centre Programming Staff: Bi-Monthly (every 2 months)
- Weyburn Leisure Centre: Bi-Monthly (every 2 months)
- City Hall: Bi-Annually (every 6 months)
- Fire Department: Bi-Monthly (every 2 months)

- Annual General Safety Meeting with all Staff (every 12 months)

## **7. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD KEEPING**

This policy shall be:

- Posted on all OHC Boards and included on COW HERD.
- Introduced at Orientation and initial job instruction.
- Reviewed annually with all employees.

All communication documentation is to be filed on the online server or on SiteDocs and according to *The City of Weyburn Records and Retention Bylaw*.

## **8. REVIEW**

This policy shall be reviewed every three years, or as required.