



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Occupational Health & Safety Report Fourth Quarter and End of Year - 2006

<b>Date:</b>	February 9, 2007
<b>To:</b>	Employee & Labour Relations Committee
<b>From:</b>	City Manager
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

#### **SUMMARY**

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This report provides information on the status of the City's health and safety system, specifically on activities, priorities and performance during the fourth quarter of 2006. Information regarding performance during the year 2006, relative to previous years, is also provided. There was a significant decrease in the number of lost time injuries, medical aid injuries and recurrences in the fourth quarter of 2006, as well as throughout 2006 relative to the previous three years. Also included, for approval, is a revised corporate occupational health and safety policy for the period from April 2007 – April 2008. Revisions to the current policy have been made in response to recommendations of the Occupational Health and Safety Co-ordinating Committee (OHSCC). Updates on OHSCC, Ministry of Labour (MOL) and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) initiatives are also provided.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

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The City Manager recommends that:

- (1) The Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Policy, as amended by the Occupational Health and Safety Co-ordinating Committee for the period from April 2007 – April 2008, be endorsed and forwarded to City Council for approval.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications to this report beyond what have already been approved in the current year's budget.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005, City Council approved the recommendation of the Employee and Labour Relations Committee that staff report to Council quarterly on the functioning of the City's health and safety system. This report is for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter and end of year, 2006.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* requires the City, as employer, to prepare and review at least annually a written occupational health and safety policy. At its meeting of November 2006, the OHSCC reviewed and recommended amendments to the Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Policy dated April 2006. The amended policy (Appendix A), upon approval, will be effective for the period from April 2007 – April 2008.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

Recommended amendments to the Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Policy are intended to strengthen the City's commitment to an effective internal responsibility system, in which all workplace parties collaborate, communicate and co-operate in enhancing workplace health and safety and injury prevention.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Policy Review**

Each year, the OHSCC reviews the Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Policy and recommends amendments, as appropriate. At its meeting of November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the OHSCC endorsed a number of amendments to the existing policy in effect for the period from April 2006 – April 2007. These amendments are highlighted in the proposed policy in Appendix A. It is recommended that the Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Policy, as amended by the OHSCC for the period from April 2007 – April 2008, be endorsed and forwarded to City Council for approval.

### **Continuous Improvement Initiatives**

The joint union-management Labour Relations Steering Committee, established to provide a strategic overview to continuous improvement plans, identified health and safety as a priority in 2006. The primary objective of the Occupational Health and Safety Continuous Improvement Initiative is a commitment to the target of achieving a zero injuries workplace.

Formalized joint continuous improvement processes continued during the fourth quarter in Solid Waste Management Services, Transportation Services, Toronto Water, Fleet Services and Emergency Medical Services. A summary of projects to achieve health and safety improvements and injury prevention is provided in Appendix B.

All City Divisions are undertaking health and safety continuous improvement initiatives. Division heads will be requested to provide regular updates on the status of these initiatives to the OHSCC during 2007. Information received will be incorporated into 2007 quarterly Health and Safety Reports.

The trend toward decreased numbers of lost time injuries, medical aid injuries and recurrences reported in previous quarters in 2006 continued throughout the fourth quarter.

### **Injury and Accident Statistics**

Information regarding reported work-related injuries/illnesses, by division, for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2006 is attached in Appendix C. Information is also provided for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarters of 2003, 2004 and 2005, so as to enable comparison of the City's performance year over year. Information provided includes:

- number of lost time injuries (injuries/illnesses that are reported to the WSIB, as the employee has lost time from work as a result of a reported workplace injury),
- number of recurrences (injuries/illnesses that are reported to the WSIB, as the employee has sought medical aid and/or has lost time as a result of a previously reported workplace injury/illness. No new incident has taken place), and
- number of medical aids (injuries/illnesses that are reported to the WSIB, as the employee has sought medical aid but not lost time from work as a result of a reported workplace injury).

Appendix D summarizes the same categories of information for the year 2006, relative to the previous three years.

A significant decrease in the number of lost time injuries, medical aid injuries and recurrences was noted during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2006. Relative to the same 3 months of the fourth quarter for 2005, the number of lost time injuries decreased by 8%, the number of medical aid injuries decreased by 30% and the number of recurrences decreased by 29%.

Overall during 2006, the numbers of lost time injuries, medical aid injuries and recurrences are lower than in each of the preceding three years. Relative to 2005, the number of lost time injuries decreased by 5.8%, the number of medical aid injuries decreased by 15.8% and the number of recurrences decreased by 14.1%. Throughout 2006, the greatest reduction in the number of lost time injuries, medical aid injuries and recurrences was achieved in Citizen Focused Services B cluster, where very significant improvements were noted in Fire Services, Solid Waste Management Services and Transportation Services.

### Lost Time as a Result of Workplace Injuries/Illnesses

The number of lost time hours in approved, partially approved and pending claims and recurrences during 2006 is provided in Appendix E. Information for 2005 is provided for comparison purposes.

### Injury and Accident Costs [Overall Costs (all Firm Numbers) and Invoiced New Firm Costs by Division]

The City continues to pay WSI costs for injuries prior to amalgamation under the firm numbers of the former municipalities. All workplace injuries and illnesses subsequent to amalgamation are covered under a new firm number (855935) and are managed within the City's Integrated Disability and Safety Management (IDSM) System.

Overall costs incurred under all City firm numbers during the period of January-September 2006 is reported in Appendix F. Comparable information is also provided for 2003, 2004 and 2005. Total costs for 2006 have not decreased, despite the overall reduction in lost time injuries, medical aid injuries and recurrences. Costs under the current firm number 855935 are shown with Fire Services included and with Fire Services excluded, to demonstrate the effect that firefighter occupational disease claims are having on the City's overall workers' compensation claims costs. These increased costs are despite the significant decrease in the number of lost time injuries, medical aid injuries and recurrences in 2006 relative to 2005 in Fire Services.

The "WSIB Invoiced Costs" report identifies all WSIB invoiced costs, by Division, for the period from January-September 2006. Appendix G(i) provides the information for Divisions whose costs year to date are less than \$100,000. Appendix G(ii) provides the same information for Divisions whose costs are greater than \$100,000. Information regarding 2003, 2004 and 2005 costs is also provided for comparison purposes.

The data highlights a number of areas where there has been a significant change in WSIB costs. Explanations for these changes have been provided in quarterly reports throughout 2006.

### Critical Injuries

Seven critical injuries were reported to the MOL during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. A Solid Waste Management Services employee was struck in the eye when loading brush into a truck, resulting in a severe eye injury. A Fire Services employee fractured his right knee when he was pinned between an aerial truck and another vehicle in poor visibility conditions. A Toronto Water employee suffered a heart attack. A Public Health employee fainted on the job after returning to work from a non-work-related illness. A Parks, Forestry and Recreation employee sustained a fractured left knee when he landed on his left knee while avoiding a young skater that had fallen in front of him. A Public Health employee lost her footing on stairs outside her work location and fractured her left foot. A Parks, Forestry and Recreation employee fractured her right femur during a skiing exercise.

### **MOL Orders**

The MOL issued nine orders to the City during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2006. Five of these orders related to excavation work, one required provision of a copy of a mould assessment and corrective measures to the MOL, one established a requirement for worker training and two related to provision of written notices to joint health and safety committees and unions regarding injuries. Compliance with each of the orders has been met.

## **Ministry of Labour (MOL) and Workplace Safety and Insurance board (WSIB) Update**

### Stronger Regulations Introduced For High-Noise Workplaces

Changes to industrial noise requirements within the Regulations for Industrial Establishments, made under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, will come into effect on July 1, 2007. These changes are expected to strengthen worker safety by:

- Reducing Ontario's noise exposure limit from 90 dBA to 85 dBA, and
- Introducing this limit as a time-weighted average exposure limit, which gives a more accurate assessment of the amount of noise a worker is exposed to over an eight hour period

In terms of provision of personal protective equipment to employees who work in high noise work locations or operations, these amendments should have no impact on the City, as the 85 dBA limit is specified in protective equipment policies with Locals 416 and 79, and this limit has been used by occupational hygiene consultants in recommending measures to reduce worker exposure for several years. The amended limit is expected, however, to result in increased demand for noise assessments in potentially noisy City workplaces.

### Province's Intervention Strategy to Reduce Workplace Injuries

In November 2006, the MOL outlined and provided additional detail regarding its intervention strategy to reduce workplace injuries. Details of this strategy can be found at <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/highrisk.html>. This strategy indicates that a firm will be removed from the category "high-risk" when they:

- are fully compliant with inspectors' orders issued under the Occupational Health and Safety Act,
  - improve their health and safety record to meet or better their sector's averages with respect to:
    - the number of lost-time injuries (LTIs) per worker,
    - the number of no-lost-time injuries (NLTIs) per worker,
    - the average cost of LTIs, the average cost of NLTIs,
    - the excess cost of LTIs for that firm, compared to its sector
    - the excess cost of NLTIs for that firm, compared to its sector
  - have a properly-functioning internal responsibility system in place.
- As indicated previously in this and previous reports, the City achieved significant reduction in the number of lost-time injuries and medical aid (no lost time) injuries in 2006. Compliance with MOL orders has also been achieved.

### Elimination of Mandatory Retirement

The WSIB has produced a document entitled "Frequently Asked Questions about Benefits and Services for Older Workers and the Impact of Bill 211" (the elimination of mandatory retirement). The WSIB indicates in their document that "There is no impact to the provision of or entitlement to WSIB benefits or services to workers as a result of the elimination of the mandatory retirement age. In accordance with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 (WSIA), wage loss benefits for most workers will end at age 65 and be replaced with loss of retirement income benefits.

The WSIA also contains provisions for the payment of benefits for workers age 63 or older at the time of injury and these will continue to apply. The wage loss benefits for these older workers, including those working past the age of 65, may still be paid for up to 2 years after the injury.” This document can be found at [http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/LookupFiles/PolicyQAOlderWorkers/\\$File/PolicyQAOlderWorker.pdf](http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/LookupFiles/PolicyQAOlderWorkers/$File/PolicyQAOlderWorker.pdf).

### **Occupational Health and Safety Co-ordinating Committee (OHSCC) Initiatives**

Development of a *Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD) Prevention* policy, hazard assessment process and training programs is ongoing. The OHSCC has initiated a process to review all City health and safety policies and update, as needed. This process is also intended to identify ongoing communication and implementation monitoring needs with respect to these policies.

### **Health and Safety Activities/Initiatives**

In addition to ongoing health and safety training, joint health and safety committee support and health and safety project work, health and safety activities during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter included:

#### Health and Safety Audit

Health and safety audit site visits, inspections, interviews and documentation review to determine the current status of the City’s health and safety program and to identify areas for improvement, continued throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. A report to the senior management team of the findings from this first audit phase is currently being prepared.

#### Joint Health and Safety Committee Restructuring

Restructuring of joint health and safety committees continued in Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Building Division and Municipal Licensing and Standards. A “Terms of Reference for Joint Health and Safety Committees” for Revenue Services Meter Readers was agreed to by Locals 79 and 416 and management and forwarded to the MOL for approval.

#### Training – Accident & Incident Investigation

“Accident and Incident Investigation” training was provided to Children’s Services supervisory staff in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

Examples of other specific projects include:

- Lock out training in Homes for the Aged,
- Enhanced training and procedures in Public Health’s Dental and Oral Health with a special focus on musculoskeletal hazards and infection control,
- Training of Public Health Inspectors on new Confined Space regulatory requirements,
- Installation of metal cabinets for fuel storage at Fort York and Spadina Museums,
- Enhancement and replacement of security cameras at Assembly Hall for increased security, accompanied by staff training on how to monitor new equipment,

- Participation in an Air Management Study – Toronto Fire Services partnership with the Toronto Professional Fire Fighter’s Association, Toronto Police Services and the University of Waterloo to study the safe working limit of a 4,500 PSI air cylinder,
- Indoor air quality and mould assessments at a number of City work locations,
- Train-the-trainer training regarding respirator use, care and fit,
- Health and safety orientation , WHMIS, first aid and contract health and safety management training, and
- Development of ergonomics training materials in support of a MSD policy and program.

## **CONTACT**

Alison Anderson  
Director, Employment Services  
Human Resources  
Ph. (416) 392-5028  
Fax (416) 392-3920

Cindy O'Brien  
Manager, Occupational Health,  
Safety and Workers' Compensation  
Employment Services  
Human Resources  
Ph. (416) 392-5021  
Fax (416) 392-5504

## **SIGNATURE**

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Shirley Hoy  
City Manager

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A  
Appendix B  
Appendix C  
Appendix D  
Appendix E  
Appendix F  
Appendix G(i)  
Appendix G(ii)