

Waste management

Workplace transport site safety information sheet WPT25

This information will be useful to anyone who uses workplace transport or who works where it is used. It will help employers, managers and supervisors to assess their workplace and make improvements. The checklists will help you to prepare your risk assessment.

Workplace transport accidents are one of the most common causes of fatalities in the waste management industry. Around 140 accidents involving people being struck by vehicles in the waste management industry are reported to HSE every year. Although the number of incidents is low, their severity is high. It is therefore important that transport on site is managed correctly.

This information sheet covers most types of waste management facilities, such as landfill sites, recycling plants and transfer stations. It focuses on workplace transport issues relating directly to waste management. Further information on a wide range of workplace transport issues can be found in other information sheets in this series.

Common problems

Problems relating to waste management are usually caused by unsafe working practices, sites and vehicles.

Drivers not receiving the appropriate information, training and supervision: Driver behaviour is a major cause of accidents. This is often because they are not trained or competent for the job they are doing, particularly if they are driving specialist vehicles and handling hazardous waste. Drivers who are unfamiliar with the site layout, rules and procedures are more likely to work in an unsafe way that puts themselves and others at risk of an accident.

Drivers not wearing the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE): If drivers aren't wearing appropriate PPE (eg high-visibility clothing and hard hats) they won't be easily seen by other site users, or protected from any potential hazards (eg falling objects, moving vehicles and low structures).

Unsafe procedures and systems of work: Accidents, particularly those that result in injury, are often caused by unsafe working practices. Waste management activities



need to be carefully controlled and supervised to make sure they are made safely, as unsupervised activities can lead to procedures not being followed, which may lead to:

- conflicting vehicle movements;
- buildings, equipment and people being struck by vehicles;
- falling loads;
- vehicles turning over; and/or
- accidents while securing or sheeting loads.

A lack of clear, segregated pedestrian routes:

Pedestrians are often injured in accidents when they are hit or crushed by vehicles or plant. This is a particular problem where pedestrians are present in the same areas as moving or tipping vehicles.

Unsafe loads that have the potential to fall or harm site users:

Loads can be unsafe because they are not properly secured or sheeted. Loads may also be hazardous and require secure and safe containment. When the correct vehicles and working practices are not used, site users are put at risk.

Additional traffic caused by the use of contractors:

If additional traffic generated by waste management contractors is not safely controlled, conflicting movements with other vehicle and pedestrian activities may occur. There may not be enough parking or vehicle routes on site to cope with the extra traffic.

Poor communication with contractors and visitors: A lack of co-operation and communication between those

involved in the waste management process can lead to a number of different problems. For example, if there are no agreed procedures unsafe working practices may take place.

Contractors using unsafe vehicles that are unsuitable for the job: Contractors need to use the appropriate vehicles for the job they are doing, eg loading or carrying. The use of inappropriate vehicles can lead to loads spilling and falling.

Unsafe tipping and discharging of loads: Vehicles tipping and discharging can be dangerous. Vehicles can fall over and spill their waste. This is particularly prevalent in areas where the ground is uneven and tipping occurs. People working outside vehicles and plant need to be aware of swinging containers and opening vehicle doors.

Checklist – what to look out for

- Drivers who don't receive appropriate information, training and supervision.
- Unsafe procedures and systems of work.
- A lack of clear, segregated pedestrian routes.
- Drivers not wearing the necessary PPE.
- Unsafe loads with the potential to fall or harm site users.
- Additional traffic flows caused by the use of contractors.
- Poor communication with contractors and visitors.
- Contractors using unsafe vehicles that are unsuitable for the job they are doing.
- Unsafe tipping and discharging of loads.

How can you deal with common problems?

The majority of problems can be prevented or overcome by keeping a site safe and having a good set of clear, realistic and workable procedures.

Make sure people involved in waste management have the required PPE: Site users should be provided with appropriate PPE. This should include footwear with steel toecaps, a hard hat and high-visibility clothing (jacket and trousers). This will ensure that staff are seen and protected from falling objects and any potential hazards.

Drivers should only be allowed outside their cabs when they absolutely need to be (eg to open doors, operate controls etc) and then only when they are wearing the appropriate PPE. When leaving their cabs they should stay close to their vehicles and where reasonably practicable make sure that plant/vehicle movements have stopped. It is recommended that a minimum 5 m clearance is kept between pedestrians and moving plant/vehicles.

Make sure vehicles using your site are safe, well maintained and meet the required standards: Vehicles should be appropriate for the work they are undertaking.

Site operators should not allow unacceptable vehicle types on their site.

If specialist vehicles or hazardous loads are being used, any special requirements they have should be met. The right vehicles need to be used to make sure the waste is transported safely. Where hazardous waste is being managed it should be contained and dealt with using the appropriate specialist vehicles.

Vehicles should be well maintained and checked for defects on a weekly basis. Any defects that are found should be brought to the attention of the driver and their employer. Statutory inspections and maintenance checks need to be programmed and carried out. Inspections and checks should comply with the road traffic acts (where applicable), other statutory requirements and the manufacturer's specifications. Clear maintenance and legally required test records should be kept.

The risks posed by tipping lorries (such as fall over) need to be controlled. Close co-operation and communication with customers on vehicle types can reduce the risks. Roll over protection (ROPs) and falling object protection (FOPs) should be fitted to vehicles where necessary.

You should carry out risk assessments to make sure that the vehicles are safe for the tasks being performed. Risk assessments should cover regular and 'one-off' activities. They should be revised regularly as changes in site operation and layout occur.

Make sure staff receive the necessary information, induction and training: Staff should receive the correct information and appropriate training to work safely and effectively. Where necessary, they should receive a full site induction to make sure they understand the site rules, any specific working procedures and their duty to comply with them. At the same time they should be made aware of your enforcement procedures for non-compliance with site rules.

It is important to make sure that staff know about:

- routes to and within the site;
- any special methods of work;
- the traffic hazards and safety distances to be observed; and
- unusual activities on site which may affect them.

Make sure your site is safe and designed for the vehicles using it: Your site should be safe for the vehicles using it. Vehicle capabilities and site conditions need to be consistent with the tasks performed. You should aim for haul road gradients of no more than 1:10. Pedestrian routes should be segregated from vehicles and access from parking areas to the site office should be clear and easy to follow. Vehicle routes should be suitable for these vehicles and be wide enough for the widest vehicle using your site. Routes should segregate heavy and light vehicles, and working plant. Where loading and tipping occurs, the ground should be level to prevent vehicles and loads falling over.

Make sure drivers and vehicles are appropriately supervised:

Drivers and vehicles should receive the appropriate supervision. Consider employing a site supervisor and signaller (banksman) to manage traffic, particularly loading and reversing vehicles. Staff who are new to your site or who are not deemed competent should be supervised by an experienced site user.

Good communication with contractors: It is important for contractors to agree the place, time and working methods for each site and activity. Different arrangements will be needed for different contractors.

Provide clear and segregated pedestrian routes:

Pedestrians should be provided with segregated routes that are clearly marked and signed. This will make sure they are kept well clear of moving vehicles and reduce the risk of them being struck by vehicles or falling loads.

Use safe procedures during tipping: Door/container opening mechanisms should be controlled and operated away from pedestrian activity. Safety distances between vehicles when tipping/discharging should be maintained. A minimum distance between vehicles of 1.5 vehicle widths should be achieved but, wherever reasonably practicable, the following minimum distances are considered appropriate:

- 5 m between push-outs;
- 7 m between other, non-articulated vehicles; and
- 16 m between articulated tippers.

When vehicles are reversing there should be an audible warning and if necessary, a signaller should be used. Make sure safe tipping methods are used. The technique of jogging vehicles to free material (shunting, or driving the vehicle and braking hard) should not be used.

Checklist

- Ensure staff receive the necessary information, induction and training.
- Make sure staff comply with site rules and procedures.
- Drivers and vehicles should be appropriately supervised.
- Ensure everyone involved in waste management has the required PPE.
- Vehicles using your site should be safe, well maintained and must meet the required standards.
- Provide clear and segregated pedestrian routes.

Checking your site

Carry out a visual inspection of your site to make sure it is suitable for the waste management procedures taking place on your site. It will help you to identify whether there are any problems that need to be addressed. Walk around the premises, make notes and take photographs of any

problems. You should inspect areas where waste is processed, removed and stored. This will allow you to observe the waste management procedure at the same time. Mark the problem areas on a site plan.

As you make the inspection, you should consider:

- Are the vehicles used appropriate for the loads they are carrying?
- Is the site suitable for the waste vehicles using it?
- Is waste stored, processed and transported in a safe way?
- Is there any uncontrolled or unprocessed waste?
- Is there any evidence of any spillages?
- Are you handling any hazardous waste?

If you feel unable to do this yourself you should consider paying a professional to inspect your site and to review your procedures. An independent inspection is likely to draw attention to the obvious things that may be missed by people who work on site regularly.

If a more detailed and wider-reaching guide is required, see the *Site inspection: Workplace transport checklist* at www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport.

Monitor the waste management process to identify whether your site has any problems. Consider checking records relating to the amount of waste being removed/delivered and which contractors are involved. This will help you find out the level of communication and co-operation between the different parties involved.

As well as monitoring the waste management process you should ask for feedback from those involved in managing waste. Find out whether they know and use the correct procedures. You should also find out whether they feel they are given enough information, training and supervision to allow them to do their job safely and effectively.

Separate risk assessments should be produced for the different waste management activities that occur on your site. Completing a site inspection may provide a good opportunity to complete a risk assessment. Information on how to complete a risk assessment is in *Five steps to risk assessment*.

Checklist

- Carry out a visual inspection of waste management on your site.
- Pay for a professional inspection or survey if you feel you cannot do this properly yourself.
- Monitor the waste management process and record any problems you find.
- Ask for feedback from those working in waste management to identify any health and safety issues.
- Produce the necessary risk assessments for the waste management processes.

Where to get help

If you have a problem with waste management on your site, you might be able to fix it yourself. If you are unsure, speak to your health and safety workplace representative or contact HSE for advice. It may be more cost effective to have a professional assess your site and carry out the work.

If you require any alterations to your site such as creating designated areas for the delivery/removal of waste, you may need to seek professional help. You can also get advice by speaking to other similar local businesses – look for examples of good practice. Contact your local trade association or Chamber of Commerce for recommended local suppliers or look in the *Yellow Pages*.

Checklist

- Can you fix the problem yourself or do you need professional help?
- Speak to your health and safety representative and talk to your staff.
- If further information is required, speak to HSE.
- Speak to similar businesses and look for examples of best practice.

What might it cost?

- A site supervisor will require a salary of up to £20 000 per year.
- A professional site survey will cost around £2000.

(These costs are a guide and may vary significantly for individual sites and circumstances.)

Find out more

Workplace transport safety: An employers' guide HSG136 (Second edition) HSE Books 2005 ISBN 978 0 7176 6154 1

Workplace transport safety: An overview Leaflet INDG199(rev1) HSE Books 2005 (single copy free or priced packs of 5 ISBN 978 0 7176 2821 6) www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg199.pdf

Five steps to risk assessment Leaflet INDG163(rev2) HSE Books 2006 (single copy free or priced packs of 10 ISBN 978 0 7176 6189 3) www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf

Designing for deliveries Freight Transport Association 1998 ISBN 978 0 902991 66 8

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 SI 1998/2306 The Stationery Office 1998 ISBN 978 0 11 079599 7

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 SI 1992/3004 The Stationery Office 1992 ISBN 978 0 11 025804 1

Health and Safety (Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 SI 1996/0341 The Stationery Office 1996 ISBN 978 0 11 054093 1

Safe transport in waste management and recycling facilities Waste09 HSE 2007 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/waste09.pdf

Environmental Services Association www.esauk.org

Further information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk/. You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

The Stationery Office publications are available from The Stationery Office, PO Box 29, Norwich NR3 1GN Tel: 0870 600 5522 Fax: 0870 600 5533 email: customer.services@tso.co.uk

Website: www.tsoshop.co.uk/ (They are also available from bookshops.) Statutory Instruments can be viewed free of charge at www.legislation.gov.uk/.

This document contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

This document is available at: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wpt25.pdf.

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