



Liability & Property Pool Workers' Compensation Fund

RISK CONTROL SOLUTIONS

A Service of the Michigan Municipal League Liability and Property Pool and
the Michigan Municipal League Workers' Compensation Fund

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: INTERNAL OPERATIONS CHECKLIST

There are over 790 municipalities in the Michigan Municipal League's Pool and Fund Programs. Most perform public works functions of one type or another. Some departments are very small, with one or two employees. Other public works departments are very large with 100 or more employees. Regardless of size, however, all Public Works Departments have some common areas of operations and, therefore, some shared concerns. This document addresses some of the major issues that are common to all public works departments (DPW).

Public Works Facilities

The Department of Public Works (DPW) should, at a minimum, assure the following in its facilities and operations:

- Walkways and entryways that are safe for employees and citizens.
 - It is important for these areas to be free of trip or slip hazards. During the winter months, maintaining walkways, to keep them clear of ice and snow, is essential. Entries should be clearly visible and free of obstructions and well lit. The department should not permit the storage of equipment or materials in front of or directly adjacent to entries. Remember that both employees and the public use the DPW's facility.
 - Conduct regular inspections to assure walkways and entryways are free of recognized hazards.
- Well-maintained and accessible means of egress.
 - A means of egress is a continuous and unobstructed way of exit travel from any point in a building or structure to a public way. A means of egress has three distinct parts: (1) the way of exit access, (2) the exit, and (3) the way of exit discharge.
 - Conduct regular inspections to assure all exits are accessible and functioning. During periods of snow, insure snow is removed from the area around the outside exit doors to permit unrestricted opening of the door.
- Adequate heating, lighting and ventilation.

Heating:

- Many activities take place in the DPW facility. Always consider the facility "occupied." Temperature extremes can harm personnel and damage materials and equipment. The negative effects that temperature extremes can generate may create conditions that lead to accidents and, therefore, indirectly to injuries and damage to the facility.

Lighting

- General lighting should produce uniform illumination throughout the workplace. Lighting should be sufficient to allow personnel to perform their duties easily. Where greater illumination is necessary, the department should install increased general lighting or task lights.

Ventilation

- The DPW facility should have sufficient ventilation to assure a healthy and comfortable work environment. The department should pay special attention to processes or activities that produce by-products such as vapor, gases, fumes, or dust that may be injurious to employees.

- Sufficient fire protection throughout facility.
 - The DPW should view fire protection broadly. Fire protection includes all measures the department takes to safeguard human life and the preservation of property through preventing, detecting and extinguishing fire. An effective fire loss control program:
 - (1) Prevents fires from occurring.
 - (2) Prevents the loss of life and personal injury should a fire occur.
 - (3) Protects property.
 - (4) Leads to uninterrupted operations.
 - Have qualified personnel conduct a review of department fire protection.
- Proper storage of flammables.
 - The proper storage of flammables is critical to preventing fire. One of the most effective steps the department can take is to store flammables properly. Stored quantities should be less than 60 gallons and storage should be in an approved flammable storage cabinet. Store small quantities of gasoline or other flammables (under five gallons) in UL approved safety cans. If the department keeps large quantities of flammables (61+ gallons) on hand, then it should build a properly ventilated and drained storage room.
- Posting and communication of the emergency preparedness plan to all employees.
 - The department by itself or in cooperation with other departments should develop an emergency plan for fire and weather related emergencies. The department should, at a minimum, post and assure that all employees understand the following:
 1. Emergency phone numbers.
 2. Site plan: The plan should clearly identify all routes of travel to exits and the location where employees should meet in the event of a fire or other emergency. The drawing should also show the location of tornado shelters.
- Installed emergency lighting if the department uses the facility at night.
 - For most public entities, public works is a twenty-four hour operation. It is not unusual for crews to be working at night, particularly when power outages occur as a result of storms. Emergency lighting is necessary to assure employees adequate lighting to conduct limited activities. It must be checked regularly to insure proper operation and repaired/replaced as necessary.
- Installation and regular inspection of security features for the facility (that is, door locks, security system, windows, panic hardware, and smoke detection). Security for the DPW facility should be a major concern, particularly as many DPW's are well away from primary roads.
 - The DPW facility stores a major portion of a municipality's assets in equipment and materials. Management should consult with local law enforcement to assure that the building has adequate security. Tour the facility with a member of law enforcement to explore options that will provide the level of security that best meets the needs of the facility.
- Restricted access to the facility.
 - Management should address personal use of the facility during or after working hours. Due to increased exposure to property, liability and personal injury losses, we recommend that the DPW discontinue personal use of the facility. Implementing this recommendation can help a municipality to limit liabilities.
 - During work hours, employees should lock the facility when it will be unattended to prevent theft, vandalism, or the unauthorized use of municipal assets.

■ Implementation of a regular inventory program.

An inventory program is an effective means of monitoring department assets. The program allows management to make informed decisions when planning work activities requiring tools or equipment, can thwart theft, and can improve purchasing of supplies and equipment.

The following checklist covers areas that are common to a thorough safety/health and loss control program. Review the following for those activities that apply to your operations.

DPW CHECKLIST

Safety	YES	NO
<i>Written Management Policy</i>		
Is this policy management driven?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is policy communicated to employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is policy reviewed annually?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Safety Committee</i>		
Does the department have a safety committee?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does management attend?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the committee review accident reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the committee keep minutes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the committee distribute the minutes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you follow-up on recommendations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a safety budget?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are members of the committee rotated regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Facilities Inspection</i>		
Are there routine inspections?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post-Accident inspections?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written reports and follow-up?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazard Communications Program (Employee Right-to-Know)		
Written plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inventory complete?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MSDS's on file?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Portable container labeling?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Posters posted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employees trained – Documented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual refresher – Documented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lockout Program		
Written program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous energy survey?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locks available (one lock for each employee involved in a lock-out procedure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lockout devices available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authorized employee training provision?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employees trained – Documented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual refresher – Documented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cranes and Hoists

	YES	NO
Operators trained and authorized?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspect operating parts daily, ropes monthly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Controls clearly marked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rated load marked (each side)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scheduled maintenance records maintained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cables, chains and slings inspected?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employees trained-Documented? (Aerial Work Platforms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Abrasive Wheels

Guards on nuts, flanges and spindle ends?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work rests 1/8" clearance maximum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upper peripheral member (tongue guard) (1/4" clearance maximum?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secure mounting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Machinery and Equipment

Published lockout procedure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Each machine and equipment provided with own means of power, disconnect, and capable of being locked out?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Power Transmission

Moving parts, point of operation, nip points guarded?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drive belts, chains, sprockets, couplings and fans fully enclosed up to 7' above floor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counterweights enclosed or safety cables attached?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hand and Power Tools

Hand-held tools. Constant pressure switches?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Saw guarding functioning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special training and guards for power activated tools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prohibit cleaning of clothing with compressed air?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compressed air for cleaning work areas limited to 30 PSI?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electrical power tools double insulated and grounded?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Emergency Plans

Fire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Natural?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chemical?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee meeting place?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alarm system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plan posted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Safety Glasses

Area designation/postings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Side shields?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Face shields/goggles available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eye protection meets ANSI standards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	YES	NO
Safety Shoe Plan		
Designated work procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Designated employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confined Space Entry Program		
Written plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confined space designated and labeled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air monitoring conducted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Egress plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Egress equipment available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respirators required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hot work permits?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Entry permits?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rescue crew trained/available if required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accident Investigation		
Written accident report?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reviewed by safety committee?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reports reviewed by management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New and/or Temporary Employee Training		
Orientation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous substances?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazard Communication/Right-to-Know law?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documentation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal protective equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flammable/Combustible Liquids		
Containers covered when not in use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety cans for storing and dispensing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bonding cables provided when necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limit of one-day supply outside storage area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adequate fire protection provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open flames and smoking prohibited?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labeled "Flammable -- Keep Fire Away"?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous Materials		
Toxic, caustic chemical identified. Proper precautionary signs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialized first aid?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialized emergency procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electrical Safety		
Grounded circuits and systems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electrical equipment grounded?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Controls and switches properly identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prohibit use of extension cords in place of fixed wiring?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Special equipment for hazardous locations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High voltage signage where necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electrical panels/switches covered/enclosed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Portable Ladders		
Proper type stepladder: Industrial Type I or Commercial Type II?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ANSI approved?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rung spacing uniform (12" or less)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-slip bases or safety feet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequently inspected?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damaged ladders repaired or replaced?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal ladders kept away from electrical hazards and so marked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fixed Ladders		
Cage or safety device over 20'?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extension for step-through or side-step fixed ladder?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have job-made ladder been checked for compliance, strength and use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearing Protection Program		
Written plan/program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noise survey conducted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engineering controls adequate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative controls considered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearing protection provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Required for specific tasks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
First Aid/CPR Training		
Employees on each shift trained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
First-Aid supplies available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency phone numbers and procedures posted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eyewash/emergency showers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AED available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Protective Equipment		
PPE hazard assessment completed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written procedures for use of PPE?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Routine inspection and replacement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety glasses with side shields?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Face shields?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job specific goggles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foot protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gloves?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aprons?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ear protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Fire Protection Program

	YES	NO
Proper types, sizes and number?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locations marked and accessible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspected monthly and annually?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employees trained in use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Valves open, tagged, sealed or locked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
System tested and alarms operative?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adequate clearances to stock (18 - 36 inches)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combustible scrap and debris removed from work areas at regular intervals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire extinguishers mounted and location clearly marked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Exits

Sufficient for occupancy (not less than 2 for each fire area)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doors unlocked or have panic hardware?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearly visible or marked routes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signs posted (minimum 6" letters)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doors swing out to safe discharge area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency exits kept clear of snow and ice?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Well lit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Housekeeping

The best housekeeping results when the organization holds each individual responsible for maintaining order in his or her work area. Management should allow an appropriate amount of time in the daily schedule for housekeeping activities. In addition, if proper housekeeping requires special equipment or materials, management should provide them and should provide training in their purpose and use.

Proper waste disposal available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work areas designated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adequate storage for material?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proper tools for clean-up available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Housekeeping

Responsibility for aisles and walkways assigned?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleaning schedules developed, posted, and monitored?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procedures for clean up of spills and leaks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CONCLUSIONS

- ☺ The areas of exposure listed in the checklist are inherent to the operation of your public works department. If you were able to answer “yes” to questions regarding these areas of exposure, you should congratulate yourself!
- ☹ If you were unable to answer “yes” to the above questions, you should address those areas in which you were deficient. After correcting the deficient areas, you will have a sound safety/health and loss control program on which you can build.

If you need additional assistance, contact:

Michigan Department of Labor, CET Division, 517/322-1809
MML Risk Management Services, 800/653-2483
Loss Control Services, 800/482-2726

Other **RISK CONTROL SOLUTIONS** that address some of these issues are:

Employee Slips, Trips, and Falls
Implementing Energy Control Procedures -- Lockout/Tagout
Sidewalk Liability Improvement Program

Note: This document is not intended to be legal advice. It does not identify all the issues surrounding the particular topic. Public agencies are encouraged to review their procedures with an expert or a competent attorney who is knowledgeable about the topic.