

RISK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION SHEET

WASTE 24 SUPPORT DOCUMENT

This WISH information document is aimed at health and safety improvements in the waste management industry. The Health and Safety Executive provided support to WISH in producing this guidance. This guidance may go further than the minimum you need to do to comply with the law with regard to health and safety

This information sheet is one of a series of supporting documents to WASTE 24 (Working on the Public Highway Street Cleaning). It should be read in conjunction with WASTE 24. This sheet covers risk assessment. The other support sheets being INFO 14 on monitoring, INFO 15 on PPE, INFO 17 on signage and INFO 18 on vehicles.

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1. Introduction and scope

There is a duty on clients, contractors and sub-contractors to ensure that the health and safety of staff and members of the public is at the forefront of the design, operation, management and monitoring of all work and services.

Risk assessment is a vital element in ensuring that all street cleansing activities are carried out safely. This information sheet provides an example template to assist those undertaking risk assessments. However, this is a guide only, and depending on your organisation's activities and policies you may need to amend the contents to suit your purposes.

Many of the issues identified will require co-operation between those involved (e.g. clients, contractors, employees, unions, and Highway Authorities as well as Highway Authority maintenance contractors).

This guidance is aimed at managers and supervisors of street cleansing activities. They may be employed by Local Authorities (as employers who operate the contract or as clients who design, prepare, manage and monitor the contract) or private contractors. It may also be useful to health and safety professionals who advise the waste and recycling industry.

2. Risk assessment overview

It is a legal requirement for employers to carry out risk assessments of their activities to identify the hazards and control measures needed to reduce risk to the lowest possible level. The risk assessment process aims to help you:

- Identify the hazards
- identify those who may potentially be at risk, e.g. staff, the public including other road users, pedestrians and vulnerable road users, contractors, sub-contractors, temp/agency workers, etc
- Evaluate the risks from those hazards
- Eliminate or minimise the risks from those hazards so far as is reasonably practicable

Risk assessments should be completed by a competent person, but staff should be consulted during the process.

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The risk assessments that need to be undertaken prior to the commencement of cleansing operations are:

- Task risk assessment covering all aspects of the activity
- Route risk assessment including depots and waste discharge sites

Dynamic risk assessments should be a continual process during the cleansing operation to take account of changing conditions such as weather, traffic levels etc.

All staff should receive training and information on the findings of the completed risk assessments for the operation and locations.

Risk assessments and safe working procedures should be reviewed on a periodic basis as the working environment and practices can change over time. They should also be reviewed following an accident or a near miss. This will help identify potential flaws in work or service design, equipment, management, supervision, systems, procedures, or monitoring.

3. Task risk assessment

Highways cleansing activities may comprise of many different tasks including:

- Mechanical sweeping of carriageways and footways
- Manual sweeping of footways
- Manual sweeping of residential carriageways between parked vehicles.
- Litter picking of maintained grass verges and other soft areas
- Litter picking of the margins of unmetalled roads
- Cleansing of central reservations, traffic islands and laybys
- Emptying litter bins
- Removal of fly tipping

For each type of cleansing activity, the most effective and safe method of operation must be designed.

Undertaking cleansing operations on the highway may expose operatives to many types of hazard that have the potential to cause death, serious injury or be harmful to health to them, or members of the public.

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There are a wide variety of risks associated with cleansing operations which can include but are not limited to:

- Moving traffic
- Operational vehicle movement including reversing e.g. pedestrian and HGV sweepers
- Slips, trips and falls
- Manual handling
- Contact with waste and other substances e.g. hazardous waste, sharps
- COSHH including dust and vehicle fumes
- Violent or aggressive behaviour and verbal abuse
- Lone working
- Exposure to the elements
- Work equipment e.g. hand tools, vibration from powered equipment such as blowers

An example risk assessment template is shown in appendix 1.

Note – this is only an example. Depending on your individual activities and organisation's policies, you may need to delete or supplement the contents when devising your own documentation.

4. Route risk assessment

Route and location specific hazards must be identified. Understanding the route from the perspective of those undertaking the work is vital, therefore, drivers, cleansing staff, managers and clients should be consulted to help ensure that all hazards are identified.

Permanent hazards should be recognised and controlled as part of the formal work instruction. Previous route assessments should have already taken into account the need for reversing, proximity of schools etc.

However, some permanent hazards may be variable due to changing conditions and other hazards may recur frequently or appear only occasionally. Some hazards can be quite unpredictable, especially weather effects.

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The table below provides an indication of some of the issues.

Permanent Hazards	Permanent but variable hazards	Frequent and variable hazards	Occasional hazards	Unpredictable hazards
Working on the highway carriageway	Schools and playgrounds	Rush hour traffic	Crossing the highways	Road traffic accidents
Working on footways – particularly with moving machinery	Road speed	Road works	School holidays	Rain and flooding
Road and footway width	Volume of traffic	Obstructions		High winds
Working on central reservations or traffic islands	Pedestrians	Animals & vermin		Slippery conditions
Poor visibility due to street furniture	Underfoot surfaces	Fly tipped waste		Events
Working on the carriageway	Working area			Low sun
Blind bends, inclines, and cambers	Airborne particulates			Fog
Overhead cables	Foliage			

Choosing the right vehicle, plant or equipment for each task and route is essential.

5. Dynamic risk assessment

A dynamic risk assessment is defined as an – “assessment of a hazard in a fast moving and ever- changing environment to establish the amount of risk and the necessary control measures required to ensure an acceptable level of safety”.

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Circumstances can quickly change as the work progresses. All staff should receive training in the principles of dynamic risk assessment to ensure they are capable of adapting to the changing needs and environment such as visibility changes caused by weather, changes in traffic volume, pedestrian activity etc.

A dynamic assessment will include a pre-inspection just before work starts to ensure all risks, variable and occasional hazards have been taken into account.

If changing conditions are deemed to be too hazardous for work to continue, the workforce should have the authority and confidence to suspend the work and leave the site. It may be necessary to complete a Near Miss or Hazard report.

If staff have any doubts over the instructions they have been given or feel that the arrangements in place are insufficient to keep road users and workforce safe, they must not start until they have discussed this with the supervisor, manager or other competent person.

6. Control measures

Wherever a hazard is highlighted during the risk assessment process, reasonably practicable control measures must be implemented to reduce the risk to the lowest level possible – the risk will not necessarily be eradicated entirely.

The identified risks and control measures devised can only be effectively implemented if they are properly communicated to staff. Details of routes and specific control measures can be complex and lengthy, so robust channels of communication should be put in place.

As part of the control measures staff should be given safe working methods, route maps and clear, unambiguous job/route specific instructions and other relevant information.

7. Safe systems of work

Safe systems of work should be designed that eliminate or reduce exposure to risk, so far as is reasonably practicable. These are examples of some of the things that they may contain:

- Start and end point of works
- Key findings from the Task and Route risk assessments

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- Management and operation of vehicles, plant and equipment
- Signage and other traffic management
- PPE requirements
- Manual handling
- Depot and Transfer Site safety requirements
- Lone working
- Timing and order of work
- Dynamic risk assessment
- Areas of work excluded and the reasons for their exclusion
- Parking information

An example Safe System of Work template is shown in appendix 2.

Note – this is only an example. Depending on your individual activities and organisation's policies, you may need to delete or supplement the contents when devising your own documentation.

All staff must be trained in the assessment, control measures and safe systems of work. Records of training should be kept. The effectiveness of training should be reviewed, and its implementation actively monitored.

8. Risk assessment review

Important lessons may be learned during street cleansing operations that may affect the risk assessment and safe system of work e.g. accidents or near misses, re-evaluation of certain areas etc. Processes are also liable to change for example through the introduction of new pieces of machinery or vehicles or a change in legislation.

Regular reviews of any risk assessment process are recommended.

Disclaimer and WISH

This information document has been prepared by health and safety practitioners to assist health and safety improvements in the waste management industry. It is endorsed by the WISH (Waste Industry Safety and Health) Forum. This information document is not formal guidance and represents good practice, which typically goes beyond the strict requirements of health and safety law.

Nothing in this information document constitutes legal or other professional advice and no warranty is given nor liability accepted (to the fullest extent permitted under law) for any loss or damage suffered or incurred as a consequence of reliance on this document. WISH accepts no liability (to the fullest extent permitted under law) for any act or omission of any persons using this document.

This information document is not a substitute for duty holder and/or professional safety advisor's judgment, Notwithstanding the good practice in this document, duty holders are responsible for ascertaining the sufficiency and adequacy of their internal and independent procedures for verifying and evaluating their organisation's compliance with safety law.

The Waste Industry Safety and Health (WISH) Forum exists to communicate and consult with key stakeholders, including local and national government bodies, equipment manufacturers, trade associations, professional associations and trade unions. The aim of WISH is to identify, devise and promote activities to improve industry health and safety performance.

Links and further reading

- Risk Assessment: A brief guide to controlling risks in the workplace INDG163(rev4)
- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 ACOP and guidance <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/I21.htm>
- Safety at Street Works and Road Works; A Code of Practice ('The Red Book')
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-at-street-works-and-road-works>
- Waste 24: Working on the public highway (street cleaning)

Appendix 1 – example risk assessment

Area of assessment: <i>(Road numbers, name, section)</i>		Owner of the highway:	
Map reference:		Works scheduled date & time:	

Highway Information				
Type	Classification	Speed Limit	Static work?	Traffic management required <input type="checkbox"/>
Single carriageway <input type="checkbox"/>	A road <input type="checkbox"/>	20 mph <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, up to 15 mins <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments:
Dual carriageway <input type="checkbox"/>	B road <input type="checkbox"/>	30 mph <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, longer than 15 mins <input type="checkbox"/>	
Slip road <input type="checkbox"/>	Primary route <input type="checkbox"/>	40 mph <input type="checkbox"/>	No, mobile works <input type="checkbox"/>	
Two-way traffic <input type="checkbox"/>	Rural road <input type="checkbox"/>	50 mph <input type="checkbox"/>		
Footpath <input type="checkbox"/>		60 mph <input type="checkbox"/>		
Roundabout / Islands <input type="checkbox"/>		70 mph <input type="checkbox"/>		

Work Information				
Task	Equipment	Vehicle requirements	PPE requirements	Comments:
Mechanical sweeping <input type="checkbox"/>	HGV sweeper <input type="checkbox"/>	Directional arrow <input type="checkbox"/>	Class 3 full high-vis clothing <input type="checkbox"/>	
Manual sweeping <input type="checkbox"/>	Mini sweeper <input type="checkbox"/>	Single beacon <input type="checkbox"/>	Hard hat <input type="checkbox"/>	
Litter picking <input type="checkbox"/>	Pedestrian sweeper <input type="checkbox"/>	Double beacon <input type="checkbox"/>	Boots <input type="checkbox"/>	
Fly tip removal <input type="checkbox"/>	Litter picker / hand tools <input type="checkbox"/>	Bar light <input type="checkbox"/>	Gloves <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Caged vehicle <input type="checkbox"/>	Fully marked vehicle <input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	
		Dust suppression <input type="checkbox"/>		

Assessment carried out by:		Date:		SSOW number:	
Workforce input from:		Date:		Review dates:	

* This document must be used in conjunction with other route / task specific risk assessments.

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Area of concern - How & why?	Hazard (✓)	Initial risk rating	Control measures	Residual risk rating	Control measure in place?
Visibility	<input type="checkbox"/> Good & Clear <input type="checkbox"/> Mainly clear <input type="checkbox"/> Poor visibility <input type="checkbox"/> Hills <input type="checkbox"/> Blind bends <input type="checkbox"/> Trees / foliage <input type="checkbox"/> Other	H / M / L	<input type="checkbox"/> Co-ordinated working <input type="checkbox"/> Provide TM <input type="checkbox"/> Lane closure <input type="checkbox"/> Impact protection vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation cut back <input type="checkbox"/> Work scheduled outside of peak traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Work scheduled when traffic is at it's slowest <input type="checkbox"/> Working against the flow of traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Working with the flow of traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Signage <input type="checkbox"/> Weather conditions reviewed prior to / during work <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	H / M / L	Yes / No
Safety zone	Is a Safety Zone available? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – static work <input type="checkbox"/> No – mobile work <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	H / M / L			
Safe working area	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Overgrown <input type="checkbox"/> Some areas overgrown <input type="checkbox"/> Limited work area <input type="checkbox"/> No safe access/egress to the area <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous waste present <input type="checkbox"/> Other	H / M / L			
Traffic	Traffic flow: H <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> Peak time traffic? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Traffic type: <input type="checkbox"/> Mainly HGV <input type="checkbox"/> Mainly cars <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycles <input type="checkbox"/> Varied	H / M / L	<input type="checkbox"/> Work only as per mapped / assessed area <input type="checkbox"/> Work scheduled to suit traffic level <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	H / M / L	Yes / No

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Works affecting the public	<input type="checkbox"/> Blocked footpath <input type="checkbox"/> Residence cross working area to access / egress property <input type="checkbox"/> Adjacent to school / playground / amenities <input type="checkbox"/> Other	H / M / L	<input type="checkbox"/> None required <input type="checkbox"/> Signage <input type="checkbox"/> Barriers <input type="checkbox"/> Provide alternative footpath <input type="checkbox"/> Parking to not obstruct public <input type="checkbox"/> Other	H / M / L	Yes / No
Exiting the highway	Can the transport safely exit the highway? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, state location.....	H / M / L	<input type="checkbox"/> Transport can access and exit the site via marked parking points. <input type="checkbox"/> Bag collection will take place with full marked vehicles	H / M / L	Yes / No
Crossing the highway	Are staff required to cross the highway? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, state location.....	H / M / L	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to the verges from marked crossing points or from drop off locations marked on the maps	H / M / L	Yes / No

Specify additional measures to reduce risk at this location.	How will this be supervised?
e.g. other risk assessments to be reviewed in conjunction	

Risk rating after applying control measures?																								
High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2"></td> <th colspan="3">Likelihood</th> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"></td> <th>1</th> <th>2</th> <th>3</th> </tr> <tr> <th rowspan="3" style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Severity</th> <th>1</th> <td style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">Low</td> <td style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">Low</td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700; color: white;">Medium</td> </tr> <tr> <th>2</th> <td style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">Low</td> <td style="background-color: #FFD700; color: white;">Medium</td> <td style="background-color: #FF0000; color: white;">High</td> </tr> <tr> <th>3</th> <td style="background-color: #FFD700; color: white;">Medium</td> <td style="background-color: #FF0000; color: white;">High</td> <td style="background-color: #FF0000; color: white;">High</td> </tr> </table>			Likelihood					1	2	3	Severity	1	Low	Low	Medium	2	Low	Medium	High	3	Medium	High	High
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Severity	1	Low	Low	Medium																				
	2	Low	Medium	High																				
	3	Medium	High	High																				

Appendix 2 – example safe system of work format

Title		Document Reference	
Author		Issue Number	

About the job:
Hazard Profile and description of Area

Work Instruction:
e.g. The section of road to be manually cleansed is Xmph in both directions, straight sections of the road will be cleansed, and any sections on S bends will not be. The red arrows indicate the start and stop points

Map of working area:
The red arrows indicate the start and stop points. Areas that will not be cleansed are:

Key Requirements:

- All personnel working with traffic management (TM) must be appropriately trained.
- The PPE requirements are:
 - Class 3 Hi-vis (Long sleeved and fastened when working on high speed roads or setting out TM)
 - Hi-vis reinforced trousers
 - Safety boots
- The weather on the day must be bright and there must be good visibility.
- Appropriate road signage and correctly marked vehicle to be used. (Different speed limits have different signage requirements)

Before starting the job:

- Your Supervisor will drive the section of road to undertake a dynamic risk assessment. In addition they will
 - Take a note of the current traffic conditions
 - Identify unexpected hazards such as road works
 - Identify areas that you cannot cleanse e.g. behind any crash barriers and on S bends
- You will be briefed on the findings of the dynamic assessment and will be given specific instruction on what hazards are present and the control measures required.

The Golden Rules:

- If it doesn't feel safe – it is probably not. **STOP** and take advice before continuing.
- The rules in your normal Street Cleansing SSoW still apply.
- Cleansing the road must not be carried out if visibility is less than 500 yards.
- Always work towards the traffic.
- When putting out road signs, the general rules are:
 - Always work facing the traffic.
 - Do not work between the vehicle and live traffic.
 - Your vehicle must not obstruct the carriage way - park in the laybys.
 - Vehicle directional arrow must be shown and the beacons must remain on even if you are not in the vehicle.
 - Do not stand within 1.2m of the carriageway edge. If there is an obstruction that reduces the clearance to less than 1.2m, then **STOP WORK**, move around the obstacle safely and move to the next section with appropriate clearance.
 - Only litter pick to the tree/hedge line or the fence line whichever is closest to the highway.

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I confirm that I have been advised of hazards identified from the Supervisor's dynamic risk assessment which are not covered within the general risk assessment.

Approved		Position	
Approved		Position	
Approved		Position	
Approved		Position	
Approval Date		Review Date	