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| Policy Title: | Hazardous Materials Policy |
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1. **Purpose**

This policy aims to:

1. ensure the safety of workers and other persons who may be affected by hazardous materials during construction, demolition or other activities on City owned property; and
2. ensure compliance with BC *Workers Compensation Act* and OH&S Regulation obligations related to hazardous materials.

This Policy is only meant to be a summary of the City’s obligations and procedures regarding hazardous materials. It is not a comprehensive overview of all that may be required. Accordingly, City staff must also consult the *Workers Compensation Act* and OH&S Regulation to ensure statutory compliance.

In the event of any conflict between this Policy and the *Workers Compensation Act* or OH&S Regulation, the legislative requirements take precedence.

1. **Background**

Under the *Workers Compensation Act* and OH&S Regulation, the City will often be both an “owner” and an “employer”, and will therefore have obligations concerning hazardous materials that may be present at its properties (see generally sections 115, 118 and 119 of the *Workers Compensation Act*).

Part 5 of the OH&S Regulation addresses chemical and biological agents. It requires employers to take certain prevention and control measures related to such agents, including that employers utilize the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), attempt to eliminate or reduce exposure, develop exposure control plans and provide appropriate safety clothing and equipment to workers who may be exposed to hazardous materials.

Part 6 of the OH&S Regulation contains substance specific requirements for asbestos; biological agents; cytotoxic drugs; lead; pesticides; avicides, predicides, rodenticides, and insecticidal baits; antisapstain applications; rock dust; and toxic process gases.

Section 20.112 of the OH&S Regulation sets out detailed demolition/construction obligations concerning hazardous materials, which are defined for the purposes of that section as including asbestos-containing material; lead or any other heavy metal, or toxic, flammable or explosive material, that may be handled, disturbed or removed in the course of the demolition or salvage of machinery, equipment, a building or a structure, or the renovation of a building or structure.

1. **Policy Statements**

***General***

The City is committed to eliminating or reducing risks associated with hazardous materials, to ensure safety of its employees, other workers, and the public.

Further to those aims, the City will ensure that it takes prevention and control measures related to chemical and biological agents in order to comply with the *Workers Compensation Act* and Part 5 of the OH&S Regulation. The City will use WHMIS as required, will develop exposure control plans and will provide all necessary safety clothing and equipment for City employees who handle such materials (i.e. rubber gloves, eye protection, wash stations, etc.). The City will also train employees on the safe handling and use of such materials and on WHMIS.

The City will ensure that it takes precautions and implements appropriate procedures and measures concerning asbestos and other specific substances, as required by Part 6 of the OH&S Regulation.

The City will train its managers, supervisors and employees in the proper identification, handling, disposal, and other work procedures relating to hazardous materials. The City will also ensure that all City employees are made aware that hazardous materials may be encountered in City property and that there are risks from exposure to hazardous materials.

***Identification, Assessment and Inventory of Hazardous Materials***

The City will create and maintain an inventory of known hazardous materials for each of its properties, by location, as required in the OH&S Regulation. The inventory shall include a description and location of hazardous materials, along with an assessment of exposure risk to employees or other persons. If a property is to be exempted from this requirement, the exemption must be documented, including reasons for the exemption.

All testing and surveying for hazardous materials conducted by the City must meet standards set in the *Workers Compensation Act* and OH&S Regulation.

***Control of Hazardous Materials***

Where practicable, the City will remove hazardous materials. Priority removal projects include City properties that are assessed to be a moderate or high risk to the public or City employees, or where accidental disturbance of hazardous materials is reasonably expected. The City may also utilize one or more alternate control measures for hazardous materials, such as encapsulation, enclosure, or labelling. This may be appropriate where removal is impractical and/or the risk of exposure or accidental disturbance is low. Regular inspections to monitor the condition of hazardous materials managed using alternate control measures are required.

If required or as otherwise deemed appropriate, the City will develop exposure control plans and written procedures for tasks involving expected contact with hazardous materials. Such plans and procedures may identify issues or topics such as work area control, prevention of airborne release of hazardous materials, personal protective wear, decontamination, property and tools, and disposal.

***Emergency Control of Hazardous Materials***

If there is an emergency related to hazardous materials, City employees or contractors must contact the City’s Manager of Health and Safety at 604.527.4631 or 604.209.4996, and the City Project Manager responsible for the project.

Emergency responses to spills or accidental disturbances involving known or suspected hazardous materials must be addressed assuming hazardous materials are present. All necessary precautions to minimize the risk of exposure to City employees, other workers or the public must be taken by the City or its representatives when responding to the emergency.

City employees and contractors are to be made aware of sections 3.9 to 3.11 of the OH&S Regulation, which provide for stoppage of work until the area is safe. Any response to accidental release(s) involving a City contractor must be coordinated between the City’s Manager of Health and Safety and the City Project Manager overseeing the project.

***Demolition and Construction***

The City will ensure compliance with section 20.112 of the OH&S Regulation, which sets out detailed obligations concerning identification, communication and handling/removal of hazardous materials during demolition and/or construction activities.

The City’s primary practice on large projects will be to obtain a hazardous materials report from a qualified third party prior to the bid tender or other contractor selection process. It will then share that report with potential contractors during the bid tender or selection process.

For smaller projects, the City may obtain a hazardous materials report from its own qualified personnel or from a third party.

In all cases, the hazardous materials report must be obtained prior to work commencing on the project, in accordance with the OH&S Regulation. The City will ensure hazardous materials reports are updated as and when required. All City employees and contractors must comply with s. 20.112 of the OH&S Regulation, and must notify appropriate representatives of the City (the City’s Manager of Health and Safety and City Project Manager for the project) and the Prime Contractor if additional hazardous materials are suspected or identified, or if there is an accidental release or exposure to hazardous materials.