

# THE VILLAGE OF MONTROSE

**POLICY TITLE:** WORKING ALONE POLICY

**POLICY #** 0125-Worksaf BC

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The Village of Montrose is committed in promoting safe working conditions for all employees, especially when working alone.

## **POLICY BACKGROUND:**

The Village has a small workforce. As a result, many of the daily tasks required to be completed by this workforce result in individuals working alone or in isolation. Working alone is defined as any work by an individual who is not within hearing or sight range of another individual for significant periods of time.

The intent of the policy is to assess the Village's work environments, and where hazards in respect to working alone exists, to provide procedures and guidelines to encourage ongoing communication takes place between employees and their supervisors. This policy is not intended to be detrimental to Village operations, but to provide guidelines for prudent operational practices.

## **POLICY GOAL:**

The goal of this policy is to ensure sufficient communication exists between employees and their supervisors when and where employees are required to work alone. This policy will outline the procedures and guidelines which all Village staff members must take when working alone.

## **POLICY OBJECTIVES:**

1. That all supervisors provide guidance to employees in making informed decisions regarding the appropriateness of working alone on various activities.
2. That all employees, when required to work alone on various activities, be familiar with this policy and receive adequate training.
3. That all employees, when required to work alone, have in their possession, or remain close to a two-way voice contact device (cell phone or hand-held transceiver).
4. The preferred method for checking is visual or two-way voice contact, but where such a system is not practicable, a one-way system which allows the worker to call or signal for help is acceptable.
5. A person must be designated to establish contact with the worker at predetermined intervals and the results must be recorded by that designated person.
6. That all supervisors evaluate the hazards associated with each activity that could be classified as hazardous for working alone in the following categories:

### Hazard Level I - Minimal Hazard

- a) Minimal hazards exist with respect to the activity and the environment,

- b) Working alone is acceptable, even after hours,
- c) Someone, somewhere, must be aware of the individual's whereabouts,

#### Hazard Level II - Normal Hazard

- a) Some hazards exist with respect to the activity and the environment,
- b) Some restrictions to be placed on activities and work environment,
- c) Applicable contact person to be designated who knows the whereabouts of the individual.
- d) Continual checking on the well-being of employees is required.

#### Hazard Level III - Higher-than-Normal Hazard

- a) Higher than normal hazards exist with respect to activity and the environment,
- b) Some activities and work environments are prohibited,
- c) Continual checking on the well-being of employees is required.

7. Time intervals for checking on an employees well-being are as follows:

#### **Hazard Level I - Minimal Hazards**

It is recommended that employees check in with their supervisor or the administration office during completion of these activities on a consistent manner that is acceptable to their supervisor or Public Works Foreman.

#### **Hazard Level II - Normal Hazard**

Checking-in not less than once per hour with designated contact is required.

#### **Hazard Level III - Higher-than-Normal Hazard**

Checking-in not less than once per every half hour with designated contact is required. Dependent on the nature of the activity, physical checking on the well-being of employees may also be required.

Standard interval check-in times for the following Village activities are listed below:

- a) Administration (Hazard Level I) – It is recommended that employees check in periodically with either their supervisor (if applicable) or with a member of Public Works on a consistent manner.
- b) Parks Maintenance (Hazard Level I)
- c) General Public Works Maintenance (Hazard Level I)
- d) Garbage Collection (Hazard Level I)
- e) Snow Plowing Within Village Streets (Hazard Level I) –Snow plowing in other locations such as the sewer treatment plant or well site requires check-in times applicable to those locations.
- f) Water Pump House and Reservoirs (Hazard Level II)
- g) Sewer Lift Stations (Hazard Level II)

**Work involving entry into a confined space must never be conducted alone. All confined space entries to be completed as set out in the Safety Management System.**

- h) Sewer Treatment Plant (Hazard Level III)

8. Unless hazards of working alone have been specifically addressed, authorization to perform potentially hazardous activities alone shall be given on a case-by-case basis for each activity.
- 9. In the case of an emergency, all employees of the Village are to contact either the current after-hours service provider or 911.**
10. The Public Works Foreman shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy.

## **POLICY PROCEDURES:**

Where working alone presents a significant hazard, a worker **must not work alone**

### **1. During Normal Working Hours**

1.1 All employees who are working alone must carry a **"Working Alone Logbook"** (schedule "A") or cell phone for those days or activities the employee is working alone.

1.2 When more than one employee is working within each department it is the responsibility of the employee who is working alone to:

- a) Check in with supervisor using cell phone voice or message contact as required by the hazard level category,
- b) Ensure cell phone is recording the date and time of each call in,

1.3 When only one employee is working within each department it is the responsibility of the employee who is working alone to:

- a) administration employees to check in periodically with either their supervisor (if applicable) or with a member of Public Works on a consistent manner during each work day the employee is working alone,
- b) Public Works employee to check in with administration office staff at the beginning of each work day the employee is working alone,
- c) Public Works employee to check in with administration office staff as required by the hazard level category for each activity,
- d) Fill out the "Working Alone Logbook" as necessary at the scheduled intervals by recording the location, date and time of each call in, and provide a signature,
- e) Check in at end of shift before leaving for day.

1.4 The administration office staff will keep track of the scheduled employee check-ins on the **"Working Alone Check-in Form"**. (schedule "B")

1.5 If a scheduled check-in time has been missed by the employee working alone, the administration office staff will follow this procedure:

- a) Immediately call the employees cell phone, (continue calling for 15 minutes),
- b) After 15 minutes; have a supervisor search for the employee, perform an exhaustive search,
- c) Call the RCMP and institute an emergency search for the employee.

### **2. After Normal Working Hours**

2.1 All employees who are working alone must carry their work cell phone (provided), and a **"Working Alone Logbook"**.

2.2 It is the responsibility of the employee who is working alone after hours to:

- a) Check in with the current after-hours service provider at the beginning of the call out,
- b) The current after-hours service provider will be responsible with calling the employee working alone at the time interval specified for the hazard level category. Working alone employee to communicate this time interval to the current after-hours service provider,
- c) The employee working alone must call the current after-hours service provider at the end of the call out prior to heading home.

2.3 The current after-hours service provider will call the employee working alone at the specified time interval. If they cannot reach the employee they will:

- a) Immediately call the employees cell phone again,
- b) If no answer, call Larry Plotnikoff (250-315-3477) if no answer, call next person in fan out sequence on Emergency Call-Out Policy #7130,
- c) Call RCMP and institute an emergency search for the employee.

2.4 Emergency call out procedures: when a worker responds to a call out from the current after-hours service provider, they must report back to the current service provider and advise of one of the following:

- a) I have completed the emergency and am going home,
- b) I have called in other employees and will no longer be working alone,
- c) I am continuing to work on the problem and the current service provider can call back at the specified time interval based on hazard level.

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