



Safe Waste Collection Consultation Summary

May, 2015

As part of its strategy to reduce injuries and establish a safety culture in New Brunswick workplaces, WorkSafeNB has developed a prevention strategy for the waste collection industry. It has been identified as high-risk and is being provided with additional support and services.

To receive feedback from waste collection stakeholders on the proposed initiative and better understand how it can effectively address the industry's needs, WorkSafeNB commissioned Corporate Research Associates Inc. (CRA) to host two consultations with industry stakeholders:

- An English in-person session was held Feb. 10, 2015 in Fredericton, attended by 28 industry stakeholders.
- A French online, real-time session (combining telephone conference call and

an online platform) was held on Feb. 26, 2015 with six stakeholders.

Findings from the consultations reveal that stakeholders generally support WorkSafeNB's initiative tailored to help workplaces improve health and safety. During the consultation, both the strategy's strengths and weaknesses were identified.

Strengths of WorkSafeNB's initiative:

- Tailored to individual organizations' needs
- Provides all organizations the same guidelines
- Assists organizations in improving their bid process with contracting guidelines
- Encourages consultation and collaboration with industry

- Establishes best practices that could be shared with industry
- Involves different types of industry stakeholders
- Takes a proactive approach to improving the situation
- May positively impact the industry culture
- Requires public awareness component
- Seeks industry input/solutions

Stakeholders mentioned that industry involvement, ongoing consultation and education are considered key strengths of the proposed approach.

Weaknesses of WorkSafeNB's initiative:

- Unsure how stakeholder and employee buy-in will be secured
- Stakeholder input required for the general public awareness component
- Unsure how both types of stakeholders (waste collectors and waste contract administrators) will work together
- Supplier safety records/compliance not available to waste contract administrators
- Not enough focus on the tendering process requirements/role in safety improvement
- Does not specify the approach to equipment inspection
- Not enough focus on residential awareness
- No standardized controls, lifting limits per operator per day

Stakeholders mentioned an increased focus is required on residential waste collection, the general tendering process and industry safety regulations.

Stakeholders also identified barriers that may affect their safety record:

- The absence of a standardized approach to residential waste collection across municipalities, Regional Service Commissions and Local Service Districts

- The public's (particularly drivers') unsafe behaviours around waste collection vehicles
- Waste collection employees not always following the organization's safety rules to improve efficiency as this is part of employee performance evaluation
- Smaller stakeholders may not have the means or manpower to implement all safety guidelines
- The tendering process often focuses on the lowest bid without regard to safety, steering service providers to compromise safety in some instances to remain cost-competitive

CONCLUSION

Stakeholders welcomed WorkSafeNB's prevention strategy initiative. They indicated that training adapted for each provider and public awareness on the hazards of residential waste collection are important elements that could reduce injuries in the waste collection industry. They also emphasized that operation standardization combined with safety elements requirements in the contracts would improve the safety culture of all waste collectors in the province.

Therefore, WorkSafeNB will be moving forward with a modified plan, recognizing that standardized waste management practices, collaboration with industry stakeholders and government, and shared learning present the greatest opportunity to reduce workplace injuries.

To ensure health and safety is part of the contracting process, WorkSafeNB will also recommend safety requirements be part of the tendering process and explore ways for contracting organizations to access suppliers' safety records.