

Subject: Health and Safety Policy Review**Recommendation:**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2020-0038;

AND THAT Council approve the highlighted revisions to the Ergonomics and Workplace MSDs Policy #S600-06;

AND THAT Council approve the following new policies: Personal Protective Equipment Policy, Hot Work Policy, and the Health and Safety Continuous Improvement Policy.

Background:

Ergonomics is a key element of ensuring employees are safe from repetitive strain and other such musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). A 2019 Ministry of Labour initiative focused on ergonomics in the Public Works departments of municipalities across Ontario. Many municipalities were visited by an Ergonomist who conducted both administrative reviews and field inspections. The Ergonomist noted two deficiencies in Pelham's existing Ergonomics and Workplace MSDs policy, S101-06. First, early reporting of MSDs needs to be highlighted and second, the policy needs to include the responsibilities of supervisors.

A review of the existing health and safety policies found a number of additional deficiencies. The Town currently does not have a standalone PPE policy, though an operating procedure has been created and referenced for training purposes, and the use of PPE is mentioned in other existing policies.

Further, the Town does not have any policies surrounding hot work or continuous improvement. Hot work is any such work that produces a source of ignition such as a spark, flame, or flammable gas. A continuous improvement policy is necessary to establish and outline the process of evaluating our health and safety program so that we continue to operate in a safe work environment.

Analysis:

The revisions made to Policy S101-06 follow the recommendations made by the Ministry of Labour. This policy has been revised to clarify the responsibilities of a supervisor, in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* 27(1)(2), and to highlight the importance of early reporting.

The Town of Pelham has a duty, as outlined in section 25 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, to protect employees through the use, maintenance, issuing and enforcement of personal protective equipment. The Personal Protective Equipment Policy has been created to reduce ambiguity surrounding the guidelines, responsibilities, and conditions requiring the use of PPE in order to defend against injury and illness.

The Town has a duty, outlined in section 27 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, to protect employees from taking “every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker” 27(2)(c). The Hot Work Policy identifies controls and best practices that support the duties and responsibilities of both supervisors and employees in relation to the safe operation of equipment that produces a spark and/or introduces the hazard of explosion or fire. The Continuous Improvement Policy outlines the methods and tools necessary to promote a ‘safety culture’ and demonstrates the ways in which Pelham is aligned with its commitment to continual improvement of same.

Financial Considerations:

There are no financial considerations with respect to implementing these new policies.

Alternatives Reviewed:

These new policies and policy revisions are necessary to ensure the Town is in compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and Ministry of Labour standards.

Strategic Plan Relationship: Risk Management

These policies will help to ensure that staff are able to continue working safely and effectively by providing written guidelines and expectations.

Consultation:

Crystal Armstrong, Ministry of Labour Ergonomist, provided feedback and resources to improve the Town’s current Ergonomics and Workplace MSD Policy. The Public

Works Manager was consulted and the corporate policy of the University of Guelph was reviewed prior to drafting the Hot Work Policy.

Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:

Appendix "A" – Ergonomics and Workplace MSDs Policy S101-06

Appendix "B" – Personal Protective Equipment Policy

Appendix "C" – Hot Work Policy

Appendix "D" – Hot Work Permit

Appendix "E" – Health and Safety Continuous Improvement Policy.

Prepared and Submitted by:

Brianna Langohr
Human Resources/Health and Safety Coordinator