

File No.: 04-1000-20-2017-504

February 9, 2018

s.22(1)

Dear s.22(1)

Re: Request for Access to Records under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act")

I am responding to your request of December 9, 2017 for:

1. All policies (i.e. guidelines, memos, handbooks) and records detailing the employment responsibilities, scope of work, and/or mandate of Bylaw Officers, City Engineers, Sanitation Workers, and Park Rangers ("Workers"), as they relate to the confiscation, 'clean up', disposal, and storage of property found in public spaces belonging or appearing to belong to people with no fixed address. This request includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Policy outlining the authority of Workers to confiscate property without issuing tickets, and any record of policy regarding the provision of receipts from property taken;
 - b. Policy detailing how Workers are to assess what property is 'contaminated', what property requires storage, and what constitutes 'garbage'; and
 - c. Policy explaining how Workers are to deal with complaints regarding property found in public spaces, including how to take follow-up action and whether complaints can come from other City staff, Parks staff, or police.
2. In reference to Workers, any training materials (i.e. seminar resources, PowerPoint presentations, memos, workbooks) that relate to any of the following:
 - a. Working or interacting with people with no fixed address who live in public spaces; and
 - b. Confiscating, cleaning, disposing, or storing property found in public spaces belonging or appearing to belong to people with no fixed address.
3. All records reflecting expectations, policy, and procedure for record-keeping when Workers confiscate, clean, dispose, or store property found in public spaces belonging or appearing to belong to people with no fixed address.

4. Any record indicating the current number of Workers and other City, Parks, or contracted staff for whom these activities (confiscating, cleaning, disposing, or storing property found in public spaces) are part of their job description and the number for whom it is not part of their job description, but who nonetheless undertake these actions.

All responsive records are attached. Some information in the records has been severed, (blacked out), under s.15(1)(l) of the Act. You can read or download this section here: http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00

In regards to point number four of your request, please note that due to the nature of the work performed by a number of different departments, an exact number of staff responsible for the clean-up, storage, and disposal of items cannot be confirmed. The streets Division reported that staff deployed to active encampments may be joined by additional staff from all other workgroups within the Streets Division, depending on the need and scale of the clean-up efforts.

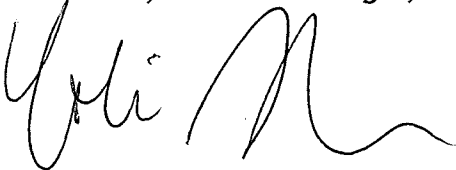
Under section 52 of the Act you may ask the Information & Privacy Commissioner to review any matter related to the City's response to your request. The Act allows you 30 business days from the date you receive this notice to request a review by writing to: Office of the Information & Privacy Commissioner, info@oipc.bc.ca or by phoning 250-387-5629.

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's office with: 1) the request number assigned to your request (#04-1000-20-2017-504); 2) a copy of this letter; 3) a copy of your original request for information sent to the City of Vancouver; and 4) detailed reasons or grounds on which you are seeking the review.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Freedom of Information Office at foi@vancouver.ca if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

Cobi Falconer, FOI Case Manager, for



Barbara J. Van Fraassen, BA
Director, Access to Information & Privacy

Barbara.vanfraassen@vancouver.ca
453 W. 12th Avenue Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4
Phone: 604.873.7999
Fax: 604.873.7419

Encl.

:kt

From: ["Eckland, Jeff" <Jeff.Eckland@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Jeff.Eckland@vancouver.ca)

To: ["Brown, Ken" <ken.brown@vancouver.ca>](mailto:ken.brown@vancouver.ca)

Date: 1/11/2018 9:22:17 AM

Subject: FW: Transient Crew training

Attachments: ENG - STEOB - OHS - Transient Crew Agenda Outline - Security and
Persona....tr5

ENG - STEOB - OHS - Transient Crew Agenda Outline - Service to Safety Pr....tr5

FYI - the transient crew currently receives the following training:

Security and Personal Awareness (1.5 hours)
Service To Safety & Protest Management (7 hours)
Blood Borne Pathogens (0.5 hours)

Cristina has provided the outlines below for the training sessions and added them to VanDocs for future reference.

Thanks,
Jeff

From: Lopez Garcia, Cristina
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 1:17 PM
To: Eckland, Jeff
Subject: RE: Transient Crew - Ops Worker II EOI

See below the info you were asking for. I will document it as a training agenda and will save it in VanDocs for future reference.

Thanks,

Security and Personal Awareness

Time: 7:00-8:30am
Trainer: Kevin Calder (Corporate Security, City of Vancouver)
Outline:

Violence Risk Awareness

- ~ Workplace Violence Sources
- ~ WorkSafeBC Violence-Related Legislation
- ~ Defining Improper Activity or Behavior
- ~ Bulling and Harassment
- ~ What is a threat?
- ~ Behaviors of Concern
- ~ Affective Violence

Situational Awareness

- ~ Situational Awareness for Personal Safety
- ~ Risk Enhancing Factors
- ~ Risk Reducing Factors
- ~ Safety Strategies

Group Discussion – Scenarios

Personal Safety

- ~ Personal Strategies
- ~ Safety Strategies
- ~ Post incident

Service To Safety & Protest Management

Time: 7:30-3:00pm
Trainers: Arete Safety and Protection Inc.

Service To Safety

Threat level assessment

assess situations & behaviors
response impacts, personal risk levels
safe choices, response to dynamic situations
verbal/non verbal intervention to defuse anger
positively deal with stress, fight or flight
safely disengage, co-worker assistance
safety best practices
self control
listening, understanding, responding

Protest Management

individual and team responsibility
visualization , the pre plan
gaining objectivity
strategies for systematic planning
review of organization policies and guidelines
verbal intervention
coworker assistance
legal and regulatory issues
effective disengagement: when and how to back away
scenario rehearsals

Blood Borne Pathogens

Time: 3:00-3:30pm

Trainers: Safety Coordinator, City of Vancouver



Tel: 604 871 6221

email: cristina.lopezgarcia@vancouver.ca

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From: Eckland, Jeff
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 11:41 AM
To: Lopez Garcia, Cristina
Subject: RE: Transient Crew - Ops Worker II EOI

Hi Cristina, do you know if the required training for Transient Crew members is documented? I need an outline of the training that is provided.

Thanks,
Jeff

From: Eckland, Jeff
Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2017 2:53 PM
To: Lopez Garcia, Cristina
Subject: FW: Transient Crew - Ops Worker II EOI

Hi Cristina, are you aware of the training required for the Transient Crew? Ozzie had said it was setup through Arete.

Thanks,
Jeff

From: Eckland, Jeff

Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2017 2:31 PM

To: Kisil, Debbie

Subject: FW: Transient Crew - Ops Worker II EOI

Hi Debbie, have you arrange transient training through Arete in the past?

Thanks,
Jeff

Security and Personal Awareness - Transient Crew April 2016

Location: Conference Room, National Yards

Date: April 28, 2016

Time: 7:00-8:30am

Trainer: Kevin Calder CPP PSP (Corporate Security, City of Vancouver)

AGENDA

- **Violence Risk Awareness**
 - ~ Workplace Violence Sources
 - ~ WorkSafeBC Violence-Related Legislation
 - ~ Defining Improper Activity or Behavior
 - ~ Bulling and Harassment
 - ~ What is a threat?
 - ~ Behaviors of Concern
 - ~ Affective Violence

- **Situational Awareness**
 - ~ Situational Awareness for Personal Safety
 - ~ Risk Enhancing Factors
 - ~ Risk Reducing Factors
 - ~ Safety Strategies

- **Group Discussion – Scenario**

- **Personal Safety**
 - ~ Personal Strategies
 - ~ Safety Strategies
 - ~ Post incident

Service to Safety & Protest Management - Transient Crew April 2016

Location: Conference Room, National Yards

Date: April 27, 2016

Time: 7:00-3:00am

Trainer: Arete Safety and Protection Inc.

AGENDA

- **Service to Safety**
 - ~ Threat level assessment
 - ~ Assess situations & behaviors
 - ~ Response impacts, personal risk levels
 - ~ Safe choices, response to dynamic situations
 - ~ Verbal/ non-verbal intervention to defuse anger
 - ~ Positively deal with stress, fight or flight
 - ~ Safely disengage, co-worker assistance
 - ~ Safety best practices
 - ~ Self-control
 - ~ Listening, understanding, responding
 - ~

- **Protest Management**
 - ~ Individual and team responsibility
 - ~ Visualization, the pre plan
 - ~ Gaining objectivity
 - ~ Strategies for systematic planning
 - ~ Review of organization policies and guidelines
 - ~ Verbal intervention
 - ~ Co-worker assistance
 - ~ Legal and regulatory issues
 - ~ Effective disengagement: when and how to back away
 - ~ Scenario rehearsals

Blood Borne Pathogens - Transient Crew April 2016

Location: Conference Room, National Yards

Date: April 27, 2016

Time: 3:00-3:30am

Trainer: COV Safety Coordinator

AGENDA

- Blood Borne Pathogens - COV Program

No Camping

**NO STRUCTURES
(TENTS OR OTHER SHELTERS)
PERMITTED IN THIS AREA OR
ON ANY OTHER CITY STREET,
SIDEWALK OR BOULEVARD.
WITHOUT PERMIT**

**STREET & TRAFFIC BY-LAW 2849
SEC. 71A**

**NO MERCHANDISE OR WARES
PERMITTED IN THIS AREA OR
ON ANY OTHER STREET,
SIDEWALK OR BOULEVARD
FOR SALE OR DISPLAY.**

**STREET & TRAFFIC BY-LAW 2849
SEC. 66.1**





CARNEGIE OUTREACH PROGRAM

401 Main St, Vancouver BC V6A 2T7
604-665-3318

Consent to Exchange, Release & Collect Information

I, _____, agree to have my name collected for the purpose of being contacted by the Carnegie Outreach Program for potential future housing opportunities. I understand that my information, at this point, will only be collected for the purpose of being contacted by a Carnegie Outreach Program staff.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness Name: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Vancouver Park Board

Working with the Homeless: A Park Ranger's Field Guide

2017



Author: Stacey Carter
4/1/2017

Purpose

The purpose of Ranger involvement in homeless issues within Vancouver Parks is to:

- a) Create a safe working environment for Rangers and other Park Board staff
- b) Create a safe recreational environment for park visitors
- c) Protect the integrity of the Vancouver parks and all park facilities
- d) Offer outreach service to those in need

Background

The beauty and tranquility of Vancouver Parks can attract people who have no other place to live, or who choose to live outdoors. Isolated areas within our parks offer an alternative for those trying to escape the streets. Many of them have attempted to receive, or have received social services in the past.

The situation of being homeless can leave an individual feeling very vulnerable and is usually the result of numerous factors, rather than a single cause. Individuals and families who become homeless may not share much in common with each other; with the exception, that they are extremely vulnerable and lack adequate housing, income, and the necessary support to ensure they stay housed.

Circumstances that may lead to homelessness fall under the framework of the following 3 factors: structural, system failures, and individual /relationship factors.



1. Structural factors – are the result of economic and societal issues; such as adequate income, lack of access to affordable housing and health supports, and/or experience of discrimination. (Canadian Homelessness Research Network, 2012).
2. Systems Failures – are the result of other mainstream systems of care and support fail; such as, difficult transition from child welfare, inadequate discharge planning for people leaving hospitals, corrections, and mental health and addictions facilities, and a lack of support for immigrants and refugees. (Canadian Homelessness Research Network, 2012).
3. Individual and Relational Factors – refers to the personal setback of a homeless person; such as, a physical health problems, disability, traumatic event(s) or a personal crisis, (loss of a child, family break-ups or domestic violence). (Canadian Homelessness Research Network, 2012).

The Canadian Homelessness Research Network has defined the term homelessness as...

“Homelessness describes the situation of an individual or family without **stable, permanent, appropriate**, housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or social barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household’s financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful and distressing” (Canadian Homelessness Research Network, 2012).

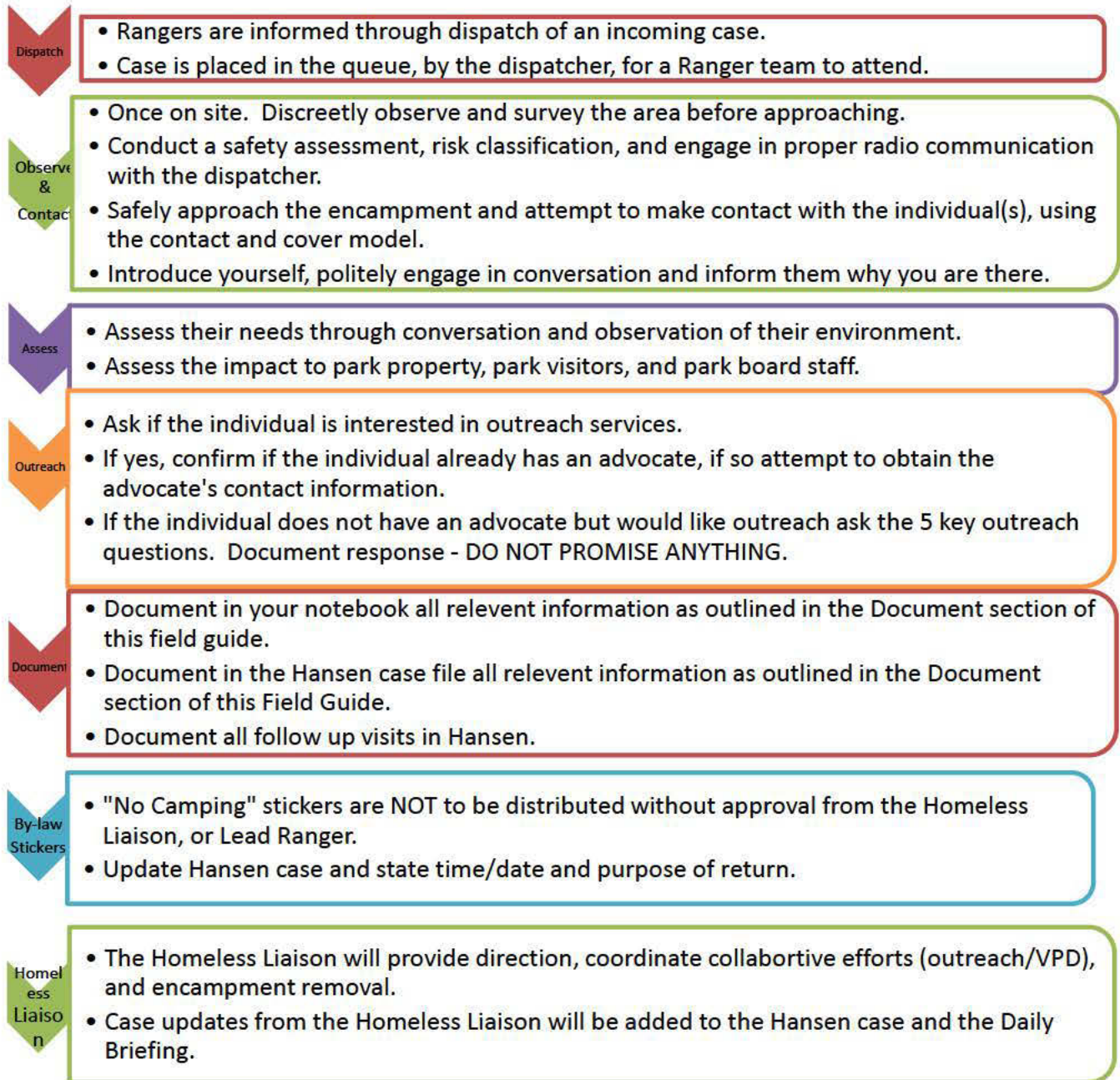
Departmental Park Ranger Policies

Rangers may become aware of an individual or encampment through a variety of means; such as the park ranger dispatcher, park visitor, park board employee or Lead Park Ranger. Once Rangers have been informed of the individual(s) or encampment, the case needs to be investigated.

The Park Ranger program engages a standardized response, when responding to such cases. The foundation of the standardized response is built on specific departmental policies that must be applied when responding to a call. If you are in need of a refresher of these policies please review the **Safe Operating Guidelines portion of this manual**. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to consult the Park Ranger Homeless Liaison. If the Park Ranger Homeless Liaison is not available contact an alternative Lead Park Ranger for assistance. **The Safe Operating Guideline Interacting with the Homeless – SOG #XX**, must be applied before engaging in a case.

A Standardized Park Ranger Response

The flowchart below outlines the Park Ranger's standardized response, which is broken down into the following 7 step process. Read on for content pertaining to each of the following 7 steps



Dispatcher

All incoming homeless cases reported within Vancouver parks are the responsibility of the Ranger team. The Ranger Dispatcher will notify Ranger teams of new cases and bring attention to cases in need of follow up.

NOTE: All homeless calls are to be attended in pairs during daylight hours.

Observe & Contact

Ranger safety is paramount and is always placed as first priority. Before approaching discreetly observe from a distance. Note your objective. Create a plan, with your partner, that clearly defines each Ranger's role using the contact and cover model. Mandatory procedures must be adhered to when attending a homeless case which includes: conducting a safety assessment, informing the dispatcher of the risk classification, and following standardized radio procedures.

Once you and your partner have noted your objective(s) and developed a plan, safely approach in the attempt to make contact with the individual(s). Approach in a calm manner and be aware of your verbal and non-verbal cues. Introduce yourself as a Park Ranger and inform the individual as to why you are engaging with them. Offer outreach services and always respect their decision. Be respectful and kind. Encourage self-directed choices and allow time for the individual to express themselves as appropriate. If needed, set limits around time, topics of conversation and your own personal boundaries.

Listed below are some common Parks Control Bylaws that Rangers work towards seeking voluntary compliance, when attending a call relating to homelessness.

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 2 | Damaging a park |
| 4 (b) | Power to remove articles or things - (when understood to be abandoned items) |
| 10 | Conducting oneself in a disorderly or offensive manner |
| 11 | Constructing or building a tent or shelter without permission |
| 12 | Obstructing or interfering with any person in a park |
| 14 (j) | Lighting or placing fuel on a fire |

The Parks Control Bylaws do not include open or stored alcohol, drug use or criminal activity. Cases involving these components can be deferred to the Vancouver Police Department.

Note: You must find a balance between the humanist, compassionate approach, and the need to keep the parks clean and safe for all park visitors, (this includes other homeless individuals). Understand that homelessness is increasing in Vancouver and many-people choose to sleep in our parks for safety. Our role is to enforce the Parks Control Bylaws, and to offer assistance and outreach services.

Assess

Assess their needs through engaging in conversation and observing their environment. Consider the individual's impact to park board employees, park visitors, and park property.

Note ways you believe the person is struggling, (if any) or behaviours that concern you. If you have concerns relating to an individual's threatening or abusive behaviour and/or physical health notify the Homeless Liaison immediately.

Outreach

Rangers extend the *offer* of outreach to all those homeless we encounter within our parks. Rangers **do not** conduct outreach. We are the bridge between the individual and the outreach worker.

If someone is enquiring regarding "*immediate needs*" such as: free or low cost food, shower programs, laundry facilities or shelters refer to your Ranger patrol bag for service handouts. If welcomed and/or needed, take the time to review the handouts with them and guide them with directions to local facilities. Some of our homeless population have difficulty reading the handouts, due to lack of reading glasses. Please take this into consideration.

If the individual has deeper needs, not just *immediate needs*, and are receptive to outreach inquire as to which type of services they are in need of. Document their response.

In a respectful manner attempt to ask the following 5 key questions listed below. This is done for the sole purpose of obtaining information for the outreach worker, to assist and prioritize their outreach response.

5 Key Outreach Questions:

1. Do you have official government identification?
2. Do you have a monthly income?
3. How is your health?
4. Do you feel safe living outside?
5. Do you get enough to eat and are you prepared for the elements?

If an individual accepts the offer of outreach the Homeless Liaison must be notified. The procedure of informing the Homeless Liaison is as follows:

1. Update (or create) the Hansen case.
2. In the Hansen case include the services requested that the individual would like to obtain through outreach.
3. E-mail the **s.15(1)(l)** account using the standard subject line Outreach Needed – Hansen Case #XXXXXXXX
4. All needed information should be provided in your Hansen case; therefore, zero information is needed in the body of the e-mail.

Once the Homeless Liaison receives the e-mail requesting outreach she/he will take over management of the case. Working collaboratively across city departments and outside agencies the Homeless Liaison will engage the requested services. When outreach is engaged the responsibility of the case shifts to the Homeless Liaison and the outreach worker. The Homeless Liaison will direct Ranger involvement when and as needed.

Note: If an individual is currently receiving outreach, DO NOT offer that the Homeless Liaison can connect them to an alternative outreach worker.

If the individual is non-compliant, yet has informed Rangers they currently have an outreach worker attempt to obtain the outreach worker's contact information. Then inform the Homeless Liaison. The Homeless Liaison will then contact the outreach worker and request their support in educating the individual of the park control by-laws. Examples of services the Ranger program has facilitated included: housing, financial assistance, mental health, detox, advocates, counselling, shower programs, free & affordable food, clothing, schooling, medical care, animal care and doggie daycare, employment opportunities, resume writing... (just to name a few).

In times of increased workload, there will be an outreach waiting list. Please advise the Homeless Liaison if the situation intensifies.

NOTE: Do not give the Homeless Liaison's e-mail, phone number, or full name to the public.

Document

Documentation is critical to all Ranger cases. Both your notebook and the Hansen case reporting system must be updated before the end of your shift.

The following information should be documented in your notebook:

- Risk assessment (1 low, 2 med, 3 high)
- Observations: include any by-law infractions and potential safety concerns you may have for Rangers, other city employees and the general public.
- Encampment: describe the encampment, record the location and any potential hazards on site: such as: weapons, evidence of fire, drug paraphernalia, dogs, etc.
- Outreach: offered, accepted or rejected. If accepted, list the services requested.
- Personal information: Full name, D.O.B, and physical description of the individual(s)
- Stakeholders: Include the file numbers of any stakeholders involved such as: VPD, VFRS, BCAS
- No Camping Sticker: If served, for what purpose: Ranger follow-up, abandoned items, or pending removal.

Note: Request the individual's name and date of birth when and if appropriate. Requesting this information may intensify the situation; therefore, it may be best to build a rapport with the individual first. If you are comfortable, you may mention your first name, but DO NOT share any other personal information.

Update, (or create) the Hansen case and include all the relevant information recorded in your notebook in the *investigation details*. Also, ensure that you include your risk assessment within the risk assessment field. This is critical information and helps ensure Ranger safety when following up with the individual, if needed.

By-Law Infraction Sticker - No Camping

The by-law infraction sticker is used under the follow circumstances:

- When Rangers are attempting to make initial contact with the occupant of an active site.
- When Rangers deem a site is abandoned, but just in case it is not, want to inform the owner of a pending removal.
- When the Ranger's offer of outreach has been denied and all attempts to gain voluntary compliance have failed. Notice is given of a pending removal date and time.

Before a by-law infraction sticker is placed at a site it must approved by the Homeless Liaison. If the Homeless Liaison is not available contact your shift Lead Park Ranger for approval. Before approval is given the Homeless Liaison must confirm that Rangers will be available with the needed resources for the date and time specified.

All follow-up visits pertaining to a by-law infraction sticker, for the purpose of offering outreach, storage or removal of personal belongings must be updated in the Hansen case file.

The Homeless Liaison may request a Ranger deliver a by-law infraction sticker to a specific encampment or homeless individual, if needed.

Note: It is essential that Rangers follow up on the specific date and time specified on the by-law infraction sticker. The date and time specified is subject to the specific conditions and variables of that particular case.

Homeless Liaison

The Homeless Liaison oversees all aspects of the Park Ranger's involvement in cases, pertaining to homeless issues, which have been reported to the department. Responsibilities included:

- Provides direction and support for Rangers engaging in homeless cases.
- Approves posting of all by-law infraction stickers.
- Coordinates outreach services as requested.
- Coordinates support from external departments and outside agencies, including but not limited to, the Vancouver Police Department and Vancouver Coastal Health.
- Directs response to our most challenging cases.
- Coordinates encampment removals.
- Updates Hansen case reports with information from internal/external departments and agencies.

The e-mail address [s.15\(1\)\(l\)](mailto:s.15(1)(l)@vancouver.ca) is the most efficient means to communicate with the Homeless Liaison. Please e-mail any questions or concerns directly to the above address.

Interacting with the Homeless

Departmental Standard Operating Policies and Procedures, (SOP-005) - Interacting with the Homeless is mandatory and must be followed by all Rangers when interacting with any individual/s.

Rangers are to work in pairs when interacting with the homeless. Rangers are not to interact with homeless individuals if working alone or outside of daylight hours. **WORKING ALONE** is defined as not having a partner to conduct the contact and cover model.

When conducting wake-ups, outreach, or a camp clean-up there are three phases to consider:

1. Safety Assessment
2. Risk Classification
3. Radio Communication

1. Safety Assessment

Before approaching, take the time needed to conduct a thorough safety assessment integrating the following points:

- Is the individual known to you or your partner?
- Consider if your relationship with this individual is friendly, stable, or stormy.
- Consider the individual's current state of mind and surrounding environment for both potential risk and immediate hazards.
- Note your escape route/routes and your designated safe zone.

2. Risk Classification 1, 2 or 3

After conducting a safety assessment, review risk classes 1, 2, and 3, listed below. Determine which class is representative of the park environment.

A **Class 3** interaction involves the assistance of VPD and has the following characteristics:

- Confined Spaces
- Mental health concerns
- Anti-authority behaviour
- Alcohol and/or drug use
- Multiple individuals
- Drug trade
- Prostitution
- Aggressive dogs
- Criminal activity
- Stolen property

Call VPD non-emerge and request their support. Do not approach until VPD arrives.

A **Class 2** interaction has the following characteristics:

- Isolated location
- Mental health concerns
- Anti-authority behaviour
- Alcohol and drug use
- Individual unknown
- Individual known to be verbally aggressive or easily agitated
- Multiple individuals: possibly concealed within the camp
- Drug paraphernalia
- Dogs

Remain vigilant. Develop a plan with your partner before engaging and always use the contact and cover approach. Disengage immediately if conditions change, or if ***you or your partner feels unsafe***.

A **Class 1** interaction has the following characteristics:

- Rangers know the individual
- Rangers feel comfortable interacting with the individual

Remain vigilant. Radio communication remains mandatory.

3. Radio Communication

The department's standardized radio communication procedures is a mandatory procedure when attending cases within our city parks. Clear radio communication is essential and aids to support Park Ranger safety in the field. Refer to the WIRELESS TRANSMISSION PROCEDURES – SOP 003 for further details.

Broadcasts are to be kept short and concise, 20 seconds or less. For longer or more involved communication a phone call between parties will be required.

Below is an example of the departments standardized radio communication. Rangers are to adhere to the radio protocol listed below when engaging in radio communication.

1. When sending a broadcast, the following structure is to be used:
Ranger X to Dispatch, ie: "Ranger Smith to Dispatch
2. **Before engaging** in a homeless case Ranger X is to inform the Dispatcher of:
 - a. risk classification of interaction (1, 2 or 3)
 - b. park name and specific location
3. The Dispatcher then responds to Ranger X, confirming the location and proceeds with a 10 minute safety timer.

NOTE: At this point all radio communication should cease until the engaged Ranger team announce they are "clear" of the site.

4. The Dispatcher will monitor the 10 minute safety timer and ensure the radio channel remains open. After every 10 minute interval the Dispatcher will request a 10-43, from the Ranger team on site.
5. Ranger X is to reply to the Dispatcher's request for an information update with a 10-4 if the situation is stable. If the situation becomes unstable Rangers are to immediately disengage.
6. After disengaging and reaching a designated safe zone or a safe distance away from the site, Ranger X is to broadcast to the Dispatcher "CLEAR".

Once Ranger X has broadcasting "CLEAR" and the Dispatcher copy's the transmission the safety timer will end. If a second Ranger team wishes to approach an encampment, thus also requiring a 10 minute time check, they are to stand-by until the completion of any existing 10 safety timer is CLEARED, by the Dispatcher.

Ranger Emergency Radio Communication

If a 10-33 code is transmitted the Dispatcher will broadcast a 10-3 code. At this time the radio channel must remain open. If possible, the Rangers on site are to call 911 and immediately report updates back to the Dispatcher. If the Rangers on site cannot call 911 they are to communicate to the Dispatcher which emergency responders are needed, (police, fire, ambulance). The Lead Park Ranger and Dispatcher will coordinate the response and assist the Ranger team through the emergency situation. Only when the Dispatcher updates the team and broadcasts the "All Clear" are Rangers allowed to continue with their patrols.

10 minute safety timers can only be interrupted in case of emergency or dangerous situation.

The following "10-Codes" are to be used when applicable during radio broadcasting

- 10-3 Keep radio lines open - Do not transmit
- 10-4 Copy
- 10-9 Retransmit
- 10-20 Requesting location update
- 10-21 Call my phone
- **10-33 Ranger in distress**
- 10-43 Requesting information – Check in status

Personal Protective Equipment, Tools and Materials

All possessions are to be handled in a respectful manner to reduce the risk of potential property damage, or personal injury.

When removing items Rangers are to minimize all direct contact by using tools such as; shovels, pitchforks, paper pickers, tarps, mattress bags and totes. An assortment of tools and materials are stored at each Park Ranger station.

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is mandatory when handling an individual's belongings and/or encampments. Review the **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT – SOP #XX**, before engaging with any form of removal.

Park Rangers are responsible to follow departmental procedures and ensure they have the proper safety equipment needed to conduct Park Ranger duties. The Park Ranger department provides the following personal protective equipment to all Park Rangers:

- Coveralls
- Work gloves
- Latex gloves
- Eye protection
- Particulate masks
- Paper coveralls – (to be used on sites exhibiting unsanitary conditions or bed bug contamination).
- Anti-bacteria gel

Dirty coveralls are to be placed in the blue dirty coverall bin for cleaning, as shown below. If the orange coveralls were used while working in unsanitary conditions they must be bagged in a large Ziploc bag, (ask your Lead Park Ranger as to where these bags are stored). Once sealed within the Ziploc bag deposit the contents within the blue dirty coverall bin for cleaning.



Gloves are to be rinsed and sprayed with QUAT, a disinfectant solution, stored in a spray bottle near the sink in the crew room.

Gloves must be cleaned, at the end of each shift, and set out to dry according to the **Ranger Glove Cleaning – SOP #XX**

If the concentrated disinfectant used to sterilize Ranger work gloves is low follow the instructions below to replenish the spray bottle with solution.



Concentrated disinfectant used to sterilize gloves - stored in BSW's cage.

Environmentally friendly notice no WHIMS labels.



Prepared disinfectant kept in a spray bottle next to sink. Mixing instructions on bottle.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Rinse gloves with hot water.
2. Spray dirty gloves with QUAT PLUS.
3. Rinse once again.
4. Hang to dry.
5. Once dried return to the clean glove bin for the next user. (BLUE BIN UNDER THE HANGING RANGER JACKETS).

NO SOLUTION. NOT TO WORRY FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE SPRAY BOTTLE TO MIX UP ANOTHER BATCH.

RATIO

1 part QUAT:40 part water

If stock is running low of any personal protective equipment please inform the Homeless Liaison or your Lead Park Ranger.

If you have any questions regarding the usage, cleaning, maintenance, or storage of PPE do not hesitate to contact the Park Ranger Health and Safety Representative.

Storage & Disposal of Homeless Belongings

The Park Ranger department will store sanitary personal belongings for 30 days – it's the law. If not collected within the 30 day period the items will be disposed of. Allowances can be made for an extension, under special circumstances, but must be approved by the Homeless Liaison.

Only unsanitary items are disposed of. Belongings containing items such as needles, feces, food, mold, or bugs are considered unsanitary. **Review the Safe Operating Guideline – Handling Personal Possessions** before engaging.

NOTE: Photographic evidence of insanitary encampments must be taken before removal. The purpose is to illustrate the condition of the site. E-mail photos to the **s.15(1)(l)** include in the subject line: Park Name – Date – Hansen Case number.

Disposing of Large Items

- Call 311 and report “abandoned furniture”, for larger items such as mattresses and furniture. This service does not include removal of barbeques, only abandoned furniture. City crews will attend to the matter.

Locations for Disposal and Recycling

- Stanley Park Service Yard: Compactor and recycling of organic matter, and metal.
- Evans Service Yard – Compactor and recycling of wood, plastic, metal, and shopping cart drop off. Refer to diagram below for specific drop off locations within the yard.
- National Yard – Shopping cart and propane cylinder drop off, only. Shopping carts are to be dropped off on the west side of the yard. Propane is to be dropped off by the rack, located on the east side of the mechanic shop.

1. 2 x Cardboard containers **Evans Yard**

2. Wood Bin & crushed Pallets

3. & 4. Construction Debris

5 & 6 . 30YD. Plant Material Bins

7. Metal Bin

8. Plastics /40yds bin

9. Polyethylene Sheets, Shrink

10. Tires

11. Household batteries

12. Oil containers

13. P.C.B. Drums (Electrical Shop)

14. Lunch room (cans, plastics & paper only)

15. Paint Solvents / Paint shop

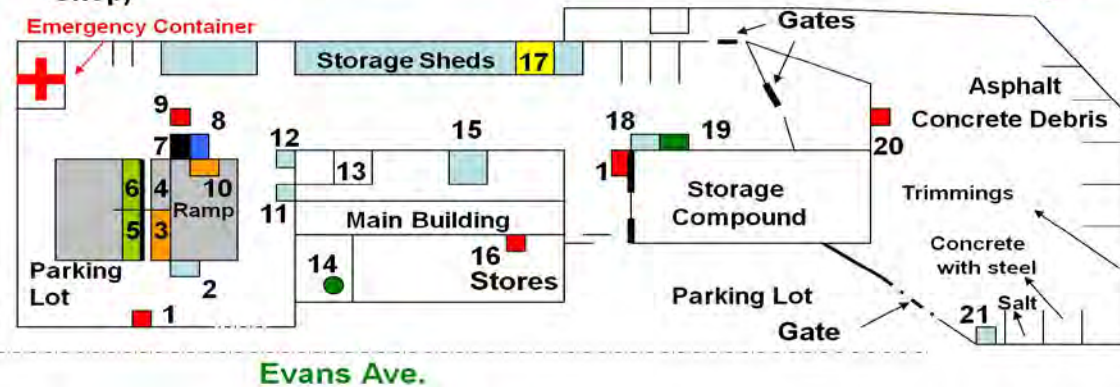
16. Household batteries & Laser Cartridges

18. Gyproc Bin

19. Asbestos Bin

20. Rubber Mats

21. Shopping carts



Disposal of Liquid Flammables and Batteries

Regional Recycling Vancouver (1-855-701-7171) accepts paint, pesticides, flammable liquids, batteries and electronics, **not propane**. Regional Recycling is located across from Evans yard at 960 Evans Avenue.



Flammable Liquids Accepted:

In order to be accepted, the liquid must have a flame symbol or phrase similar to "keep away from open spark or flame" on the label.

- camp fuels
- liquid adhesives with flammable symbol
- other flammables or solvents that have the flame symbol or wording similar to "keep away from open spark or flame," and must be a liquid.
- other solvents
- paint thinners

Gasoline Products Accepted:

Gasoline in approved ULC containers only. Maximum container size accepted is 25 litres.

Containers cannot be returned.

Maximum container size:

- kerosene - 9 litres.
- other liquids - 10 litres

! MUST be in a sealed ULC approved container.

Note: Regional Recycling Vancouver does not accept propane. Propane cylinders are to be dropped off by "the rack" located on the east side of National yard adjacent to the mechanic's shop.

Storing of Possessions

s.15(1)(l)

Storage Procedures

1. Storable items are to be placed inside a tote lined with a mattress bag.
2. Totes for storage are to be tagged with the following information:
 - a. Date stored
 - b. Hansen case number
 - c. Park and approximate location - example, NE side of Lost Lagoon
 - d. Upcoming disposal date

When the job is completed please ensure that;

1. Dirty coveralls are deposited in the blue bin labeled “Dirty Coveralls”, located in the Ranger locker room.
2. Clean gloves with disinfectant before returning them back into circulation.
3. Update or create the Hansen Case

Delivery of Stored Possessions

Individuals seeking their possessions will contact 311, and leave their contact information for a Ranger to return their call. The Ranger will then contact the individual and coordinate the return of their possessions. If they do not have a contact number, the 311 agent will ask for permission to patch the individual through.

Note: Do not give out any internal Park Ranger numbers, or promise the return of their belongings **before** confirming that their possessions are in ranger care.

All deliveries are to be made in daylight hours in pairs. s.15(1)(l)

s.15(1)(l) Before delivering stored possession review the SOP – Delivering Homeless Possessions.

If the individual has not obtained a fixed address please:

1. Arrange to reunite the individual with their possessions outside the Vancouver Police Department located at 2120 Cambie Street, or at any of the 9 Community Policing Centers listed below.

Vancouver Community Policing Center Locations

<p>Chinese CPC 118 Keefer Street, V6A 1X4 Tel: 604-688-5030 Fax: 604-688-5070 info@chinesecpc.com Mon-Fri 9:00 am - 5:00 pm Sat/Sun 10:00 am - 4:00 pm</p>	<p>Granville Downtown CPC 1263 Granville Street, V6Z 1M5 Tel: 604-717-2920 Fax: 604-717-2922 granville_cpc@yahoo.ca Mon-Sat 9:00 am - 9:00 pm</p>
<p>Vancouver Aboriginal CPC 875 East Hastings Street, V6A 1R8 Tel: 604-678-3790 Fax: 604-678-3792 coordinator@vacpc.org</p>	<p>Kitsilano Fairview CPC 78 - 1687 West Broadway, V6J 1X2 Tel: 604-717-4023 Fax: 604-717-4029 kitsfaircpc.com Mon-Fri 10:00 am - 3:00 pm</p>
<p>Grandview Woodland CPC 1977 Commercial Drive, V5N 4A8 Tel: 604-717-2932 Fax: 604-717-2923 info@gwcpc.ca Mon-Th 12:00 pm - 8:00 pm Fri 12:00 pm - 6:00 pm Sat 10:00 am - 4:00 pm</p>	<p>Hastings Sunrise CPC 2620 East Hastings Street, V5K 1Z6 Tel: 604-717-3584 Fax: 604-216-0991 info@hscpc.com Mon - Fri 9:30 am - 4:30 pm Sat 10:00 am - 4:00 pm</p>
<p>Collingwood CPC 5160 Joyce Street, V5R 4H1 Tel: 604-717-2935 Fax: 604-430-4955 chris@collingwoodcpc.com Mon-Sat 9:00 am - 5:00 pm</p>	<p>South Vancouver CPC 5657 Victoria Drive, V5P 3W2 Tel: 604-717-2940 Fax: 604-327-2902 svpc@telus.net Mon 9:00 am - 1:00 pm Tues - Fri 9:00 am - 5:00 pm</p>
<p>Kerrisdale Oakridge Marpole CPC 6070 East Boulevard, V6M 3V5 Tel: 604-717-3434 or 604-717-3433 Fax: 604-717-3432 komcpc@shaw.ca Mon-Fri 9:30 am - 4:30 pm</p>	

If the individual has secured lodging please:

1. Arrange to meet the individual **outside** their building of residence.
2. **Do not enter the building at any time.**

When the job is completed please ensure that:

1. All totes are returned to s.15(1)(l)
2. Update the Hansen case

Bed Bugs

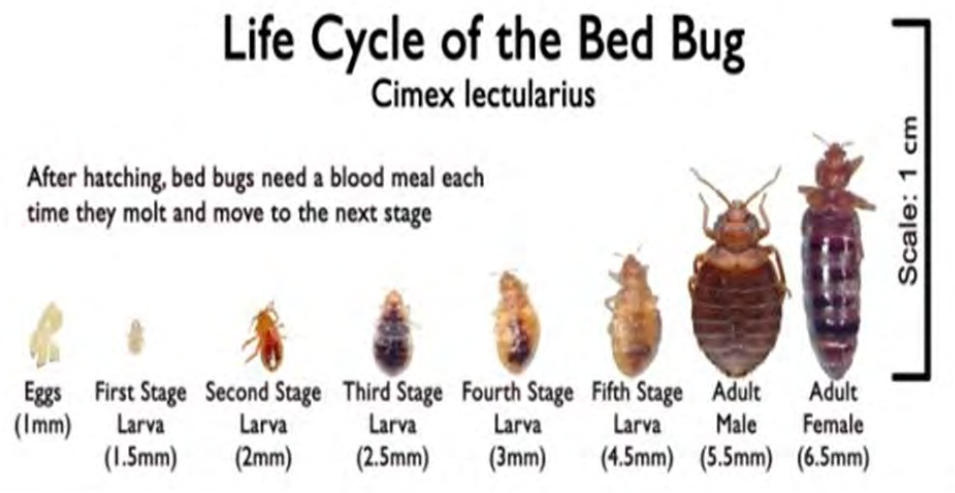
Before removing belongings that do, or may, contain bedbugs, review the **Safe Operating Guideline – Working with Bed Bugs**. Following this guideline will greatly reduce any possible risk of picking up “hitchhiking” bed bugs.

Bed bugs are small, brownish, flattened parasites, with adults being about the size of an apple seed, refer to the picture below. A bed bug bite has the same affects as a mosquito bite. It usually results in a red, itchy bump; although, some individuals do not experience a reaction to the bite.

Bed bugs are very resilient and hard to eliminate. They spread by "hitching rides" on clothing, luggage, used furniture, and mattresses. They live in bedding, mattresses, furniture and cracks in walls.

Bed bugs are slow moving and do not travel in search of a blood supply. They feed on the blood of humans, birds and other animals. Bed bugs do not live on their hosts, but visit them to feed mostly at night. They **need** a stationary food source to survive; typically, someone who is sleeping. It is important for Rangers to know that spreading bed bugs is not easily done within our working environment; for our working environment does not provide a stationary food source. In order for the bedbug to survive it must feed throughout each stage of its life cycle. The bed bug needs a food source and a breeding partner in order to multiple. **The only time to be concerned about an infestation is if multiple bed bugs are seen through the various stages of their life cycle.** If you see a bug - kill it, this action will probably adequately deal with the problem.

Rangers are to follow the SOG – Working with Bed Bugs and practice full due diligence when working with infested items.



Extreme Weather Response

The purpose of the Extreme Weather Response, (EWR) is to provide temporary seasonal shelter to reduce hardships and risk for the homeless.

Background

An extreme weather response is called when conditions are deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of the homeless, such as:

- Temperature @ or below – 2 degrees Celsius
- Significant snow accumulation
- Significant windstorms that may present danger to persons living in makeshift shelters such as cardboard boxes or lean-tos
- Prolonged heavy rain in combination with low temperatures

Each community in Metro Vancouver independently decides what weather conditions warrant an alert and how many shelters and spaces are to be activated.

Extreme Weather Response Notification

When an Extreme Weather Response, (EWR) is declared, Rangers will receive a notification e-mailed directly to the Ranger iPhones.

A Ranger's Responsibility during an Extreme Weather Response

Rangers are to mitigate the potential risks homeless individuals may become exposed to, as a result of, exposure to the elements.

- Inform homeless individuals an EWR has been declared
- Encourage the homeless utilize the Extreme Weather Response shelters
- Encourage them to call 211 to confirm locations and available space of a shelter near them. If they are in need of assistance please support them by contacting 211 on their behalf. **Free call**

Note: Rangers cannot force an individual into a shelter. Rangers can only encourage and offer assistance to locate an available bed. Always show respect for the individual's wishes, even if that is to be left alone. Rangers are prohibited from transporting members of the public in a city vehicle.

When Shelter is refused and Health is at Risk

When there is concern for human health, due to exposure please discretely call VPD Non-Emerge and report your concern. You do not need to stay on site for their arrival. The Vancouver Police Department will attend and make an assessment detaining the individual for the night if needed.

Assessing Severity of Exposure - Hypothermia

Someone with hypothermia usually isn't aware of his or her condition because the symptoms often begin gradually. Also, the confused thinking associated with hypothermia prevents self-awareness. The confused thinking can also lead to risk-taking behavior.

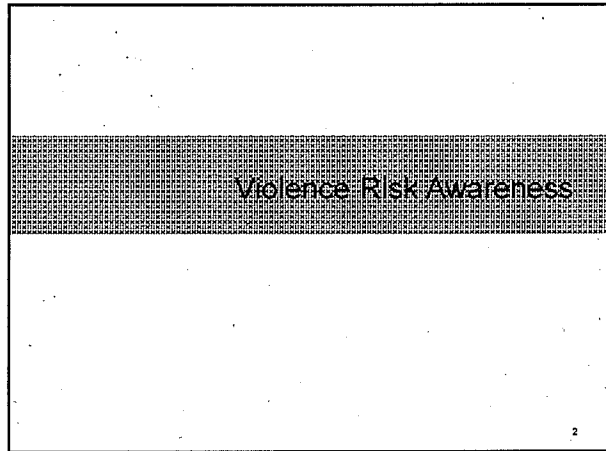
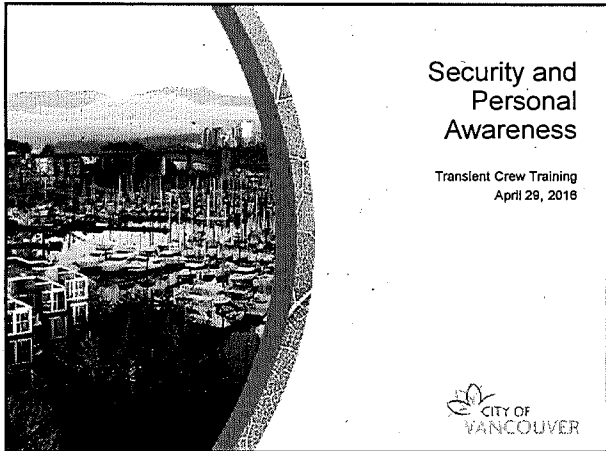
Shivering is likely the first thing you'll notice as the temperature starts to drop because it's your body's automatic defense against cold temperature — an attempt to warm itself. As your body temperature drops, signs and symptoms of **mild hypothermia** include:


- Shivering
- Nausea
- Slight confusion
- Lack of coordination
- Dizziness
- Faster breathing
- Fatigue
- Hunger
- Trouble speaking
- Increased heart rate

As your body temperature continues to drop, signs and symptoms of **moderate to severe hypothermia** include:

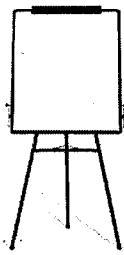
- Shivering, although as hypothermia worsens, shivering stops
- Clumsiness or lack of coordination
- Slurred speech or mumbling
- Confusion and poor decision-making, such as trying to remove warm clothes
- Drowsiness or very low energy
- Lack of concern about one's condition
- Progressive loss of consciousness
- Weak pulse
- Slow, shallow breathing

The signs and symptoms listed above can be very difficult for Rangers to clearly detect; therefore, follow your instinct and never hesitate to call the Vancouver Police Department for an assessment.




Training Agenda 

- WCB regulations
- Violence risk sources
- Behaviour of concern
- Emotional violence
- Situational awareness
- Personal safety strategies
- Post incident follow up



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Workplace Violence Sources 

- Clients (current and former)
- Friends, associates and family of clients
- Current and former co-workers
- Current and former intimate partners
- No relationship

City of Vancouver Corporate Security 4

WorkSafe BC Violence-related Legislation



- Workplace Conduct 4.25
- Workplace Violence 4.28
- Bill 14 Bullying and Harassment



5

WorkSafe BC Workplace Violence Definition



- "Violence" means attempted, threatened or actual conduct of a person (**other than a worker**) that causes or is likely to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour that gives a worker **reasonable** cause to believe that he or she is at risk of injury.

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Defining Improper Activity or Behaviour



- Regulation 4.24 (a): the attempted or actual exercise **by a worker towards another worker** of any physical force so as to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement, or behaviour which gives the worker reasonable cause to believe he or she is at risk of injury, and
- (b) horseplay, practical jokes, unnecessary running or jumping similar conduct.




Bullying and Harassment




- Bullying and harassment: includes any inappropriate vexatious conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated, offended or intimidated, but
- (b) excludes any reasonable action taken by the employer, a manager or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment.




Behaviours of Concern 

Behaviours of Concern

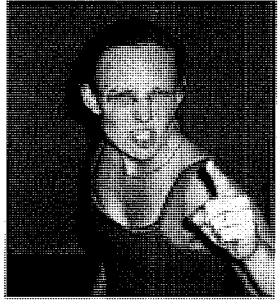


Inappropriate Intimidation/Bullying Stalking Threatening Violent

9


What is a threat? 

- A person may make a threat.
- A person may pose at threat

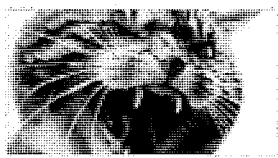



Source: Dictionary.com

10

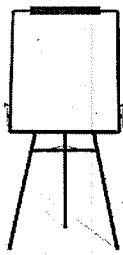
Affective Violence 

- Physiological reaction (increased heart rate, sweating, redness or flushing of skin, hyper-activity)
- Individual and subjective experience of emotion
- Reactive and immediate violence (may or may not occur)
- Internal or external perceived threat
- Goal is threat reduction
- Possible collateral risk to others
- Time-limited sequence



Group Discussion 

- What are examples of affective incidents that are faced by the Transient Crew?



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Situational Awareness

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Situational Awareness for Personal Safety

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Street Vending

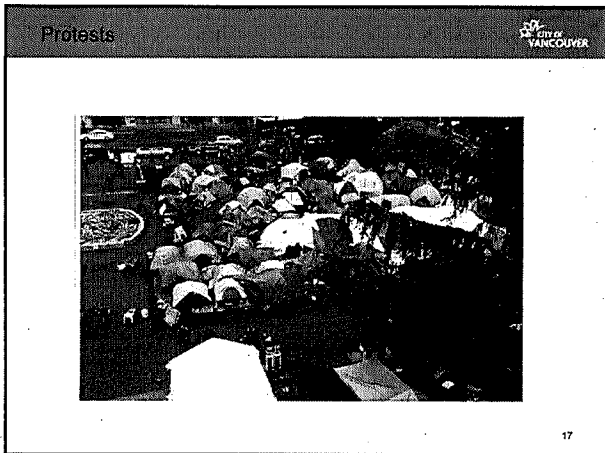
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15

Vendors 2

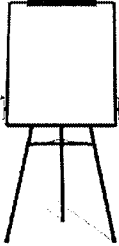
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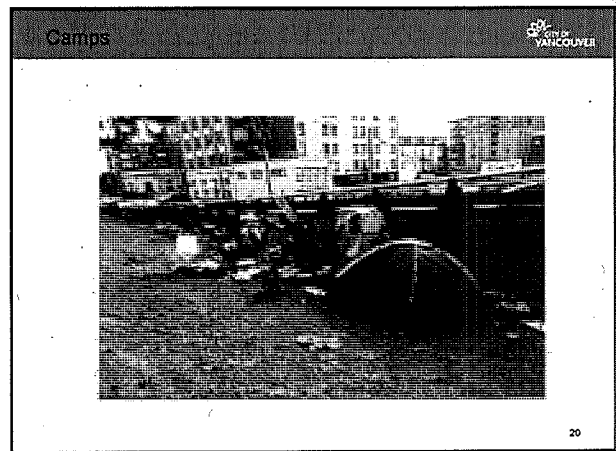
Group Discussion

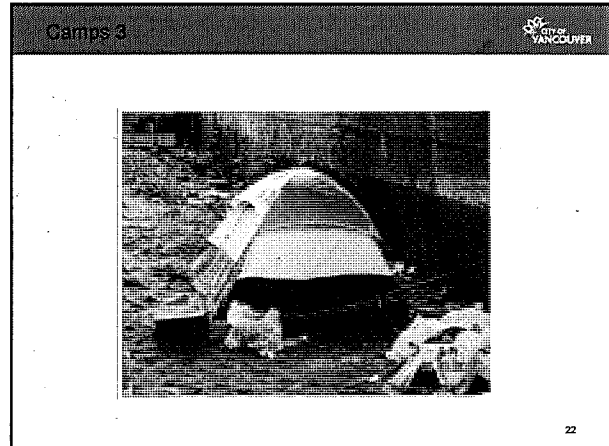
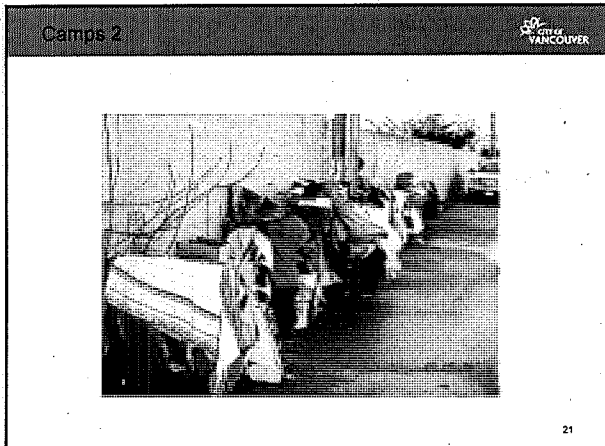
- It's closing time (after dark) at your location.
- There are two men talking in the parking area.
- You are going to exit the building by yourself.



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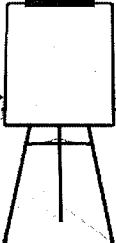



- Risk Enhancing Factors
- Behaviours influenced by alcohol, drugs and mental illness
 - Verbal and physical aggression
 - Multiple individuals
 - Fear and anxiety
 - Isolation
 - Lack of support
- 23

- Risk Reducing Factors
- ✓ Ability to address issue
 - ✓ Presence of support
 - ✓ Previous experience and training
 - ✓ Distance and shielding
 - ✓ Remote or distance incident management
 - ✓ Multiple responders
- 24


Group Discussion 

- As you approach a camp describe what do you look for first?
- Who has what responsibilities?
- How and when would you disengage?






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Personal Safety

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Personal Strategies 


- Maintain situational awareness
- If you become frustrated or angry disengage
- Balance customer service/ personal safety
- Listen to your intuition...
- Report suspicious activity

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Personal Safety Strategies 


- Create distance between you and the aggressor (distance and shielding)
- Give the aggressor clear instructions (i.e. back up, move away)
- Disengage if you are physically at risk
- Follow the individual's demands
- Do not make any sudden movements
- Tell the individual what you are doing at each step
- Keep your hands visible
- Do not follow the individual

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Post Incident 


- Call 911
- Document the following:
 - Height
 - Weight
 - Hair and eye colour
 - Clothing
 - Physical features (scars, tattoos)
 - Weapon
 - Vocal features
 - What occurred (threats, assault)
 - What was taken (vandalism, physical assets)

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Post Incident 

- Provide support for those involved
- Secure the area for police/OHS investigation
 - Do not move anything
 - Make notes immediately
- Consider operational impact
 - Internal and external
 - Make organisational notifications

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Corporate Security Contact Information 

Kevin Calder
Office: 604-873-7743
kevin.calder@vancouver.ca

32

Title: Controlling Exposure to Bed Bugs

Business Unit: Engineering Services

Effective Date: September 2017

Branch: STEOB

Revision Date: _____

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This Safe Operating Procedure (SOP) has been developed to create awareness and minimize exposure to bed bugs. It will serve to identify and/or manage hazards likely to be encountered by workers who perform tasks which involve the dismantling of transient camps (see 'SOP: *Dismantling of Transient Camps*' for definition of *Transient Camp*).

Hazards associated with working with bed bugs include, but are not limited to:

- Possible contamination of city vehicles and workplace.
- Possible contamination of employee's personal vehicle or residence.

NOTE: If someone is in a place that is severely infested, bedbugs may actually crawl onto and be carried by people's clothing, although this is an atypical behavior – except in the case of severe infestations, bedbugs are NOT usually carried from place to place by people on clothing they are currently wearing.

If the Transient Crew is attending a site that is severely infested, bedbugs may crawl onto and be transported on one's coveralls, although this is an atypical behavior. Bed bugs are slow moving and usually transferred inadvertently by hitching a ride on furniture or used clothing brought directly into one's workplace or home.

II. HAZARD ANALYSIS / RISK ASSESSMENT

The following Safe Operating Procedure was developed from a Task Hazard Analysis conducted by Streets, Traffic and Electrical Operations Branch to control risks identified in Risk Assessment Dismantling of Transient Camps, located in the following VanDocs document: ENG - STEOB - OHS - Streets Risk Assessment.

III. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

The following PPE must be worn all times when the site is suspected to be infested with bed bugs:

- Gloves (disposable gloves underneath and work gloves on top)
- Coveralls (long sleeve, high visibility)
- Safety boots
- Safety glasses

Other PPE may be required depending on the risks identified during the site inspection (i.e.: airborne contaminants, pathogens, pollutants, irritants, smoke, body fluids).

IV. TOOLS/ EQUIPMENT/ MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Duct tape (for coveralls).
- Clear plastic bags (for coveralls, shoes, clothes).
- See '*SOP: Dismantling of Transient Camps*' for tools, equipment, materials required during the site clean-up and dismantling.

V. PROCEDURE

1. Risk Assessment

- The risks present at every site must be assessed before the beginning of the work (see '*SOP: Dismantling of Transient Camps*', point 5, '*Site Clean-Up and Dismantling*').
- A trained and experienced staff **MUST** assess the risks present in the site - such as needles, feces, other blood borne pathogens (BBP), weapons, sharp objects, flammables, bed bugs - prior to the crew dismantling or cleaning of the transient camp.
- Plan the response according to the risks identified in the assessment.

2. Site Suspected to be infested with Bed Bugs

Before the job

- Wear all PPE (gloves, coveralls, safety boots, and safety glasses). Coveralls are mandatory over your personal clothes if bed bugs are present.
- Duct-tape the coverall on wrists (over the gloves) and ankles (over the boots).

During the job

- Hands-off approach when removing abandoned belongings (see 'SOP: Dismantling of Transient Camps').
- Use of tools as a method of removal (such as forks, rakes, shovels, tarps, paper picker "tongs").
- Whenever practicable, abandoned material should be collected and loaded for transport using mechanical equipment such as backhoes and loaders.

After the job

**** Every time before entering the City vehicle*

- Stomp your boots and shake out your coverall while it is on.
- Visually inspect your partner's coveralls and boots. Remember to unroll the cuffs and collar of your coveralls, allowing for a thorough inspection from head to toe.

**** At the end of the shift*

- Place the coverall in a clear plastic bag and seal it. Write your name and the date with a sharpie in the plastic bag to identify the coverall.
- After removing the coveralls, visually inspect your partner's clothing underneath.

**** At the yard*

- Place the sealed plastic bag with the coverall in the container for dirty coveralls. The bed bugs will be visible in the corners of the clear plastic bag after the coverall has been in the bag for 12h.
- Inform your Supervisor and Superintendent if you were exposed to bed bugs so the incident can be documented for future reference.

**** Additional precaution*

- At the end of your shift, if you leave your shoes and clothes in a clear sealed bag for 12 hours and there are bed bugs, the bed bugs will be visible in the corners of the clear plastic bag.

VI. IN THE EVENT OF AN EXPOSURE

If bed bugs are found, notify your Supervisor and Superintendent for appropriate controls. This may include:

- Laundry service (NOTE: the laundry service provider must be notified about the bed bug issue before dropping off so they can isolate the contaminated clothes).
- Vehicle fumigation.
- Special work arrangement.

As per the 'CoV Safety Program: Bed Bugs', the City will investigate applications from employees who think they may have taken bed bugs home from work on a case-by-case basis.

VII. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a serious medical emergency, contact 911 and advise the operator of the situation and your location. Contact the designated site first aid attendant and the Crew Supervisor for assistance. Contact the Superintendent to advise them of the incident.

In the event of difficulties on the job that may pose a safety hazard, contact the Supervisor or Superintendent for further instructions via radio or cell phone.

VIII. CONTROL CHANGES


<i>Review</i>	<i>Description of change</i>	<i>Revision Date</i>
1	Creation	September 2017

IX. SIGN-OFF

Approved by:

Ken Brown	Signature:
STEOB Manager	Date:

APPENDIX A: Bed Bugs Program



CITY OF
VANCOUVER

HUMAN RESOURCES

citywire
vancouver.ca
Quickfind
Search site

HR Home
Health & Safety
Careers
Pay & Benefits
Collective Agreements
CityLearn


[HR Home](#) / [Health & Safety](#) / [Safety & Prevention](#) / [Safety Programs](#) / [Chemicals, Occupational Exposure & Controls - Bed Bugs](#)

Safety & Prevention

- [Safety Talks](#)
- [Safety Management System](#)
- ▼ [Safety Programs](#)
 - ▼ [Chemicals, Occupational Exposure & Controls](#)
 - [Asbestos](#)
 - Bed Bugs
 - ▶ [Blood Borne Pathogens](#)
 - [Hazardous Materials & Substances Program](#)
 - [Hearing Conservation](#)
 - [Heat Stress/Cold Stress](#)
 - [Microbiological Agents Program](#)
 - [Personal Protective Equipment](#)
 - [Respiratory Protection](#)
 - [Smoking \(Clean Air\)](#)
 - [Toxic Process Gases Program](#)
 - ▶ [WHMIS](#)
- [Training](#)
- ▶ [Hazard Reporting](#)
 - [New Employee Safety Orientation](#)
 - [Incident Investigation](#)
 - [Workplace Inspections](#)
 - [New This Month](#)

Bed Bugs (*Cimex lectularius*)

Over the past several years there has been a resurgence of bed bugs worldwide. In Vancouver, the Downtown Eastside has been hit hard. Bed bugs have also been found in many BC buildings, including private homes, apartments, hotels, universities, and residential care homes.



Bed bugs are small brownish, flattened parasites - about the size of an apple seed. They feed on the blood of humans, birds and other animals. Bed bugs do not live on their hosts, but visit them to feed, mostly at night. A bed bug bite is like a mosquito bite. It may result in a red, itchy bump, but many people have no reaction at all. For more information view our Frequently Asked Questions VanDocs or look at the resources listed at the end.

Bed bugs are very resilient and hard to eliminate. They spread by "hitching rides" on clothing, purses and luggage. They live in mattresses and bedding, furniture and cracks in walls.

Bed bugs are NOT associated with the transmission of human disease, so although they can be unpleasant, they are not considered a health hazard or safety issue.

Individual Precautions and Care to avoid taking bed bugs home

- Keep your work clothes and work shoes at work and separate from your regular clothes and shoes.
- Change into your work clothes and work shoes at work.
- Store your regular clothes (shirts, pants, shoes, socks, underwear) and shoes in a sealable container or sealable clear plastic bag at work.
- At the end of the day/shift, take off work clothes and shoes shake them and put them in clear sealed plastic bags.
- Examine your non-work clothes and shoes, shake them out, if no bed bugs are spotted, change into your regular clothes and shoes before going home.
- Put your dirty clothes in a clear sealable plastic bag. If you leave the shoes or clothes in a clear bag for 12 hours and there are bed bugs, the bed bugs will be visible in the corners of the clear plastic bag.
- When bringing dirty clothes home (in a sealed clear plastic bag), wash all your work laundry immediately with hot water and dry in the dryer on hot.
- Avoid wearing pants with cuffs as they provide a place for bugs to "hitchhike" and hide.
- Wear light coloured clothes when possible as the bugs will be easier to see.
- Do not re-use the clear plastic bags.

What to do if you think you have bed bugs

- Steps to follow if you think you have [bedbugs in your home](#)
- [Guide for supervisors](#) when an employee believes they have taken bed bugs home from their workplace.
- The City will investigate applications from employees who think they may have taken bed bugs home from work on a case-by-case basis.
- [Application for approval for reimbursement of professional treatment bed bug costs](#)

More Resources

- [A Guide to Help You Control Bed Bugs External website \(Vancouver Coastal Health\)](#)
- [Bed Bugs External website \(BC Housing\)](#)
- [Bed Bugs External website \(HealthLink BC\)](#)
- [Bed Bugs External website \(Ministry of Health\)](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

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[Contact](#) | [News & Events](#)

APPENDIX B: Bed Bug Information Sheet

What do bedbugs look like?

Adult bedbugs are reddish brown, flattened, oval, and wingless, with microscopic hairs that give them a banded appearance. They are visible to the naked eye, adults growing to 4 to 5 mm (one-eighth to three-sixteenths of an inch) in length. *They do not move quickly enough to escape the notice of an attentive observer.* Newly hatched nymphs are translucent and lighter in color and continue to become browner as they reach maturity. They are approximately the same size as a lentil or apple seed. The eggs are visible to the naked eye measuring 1 mm in length (approx. 2 grains of salt) and are a milky-white tone in color.



What are the health effects on humans?

Bedbugs have not been linked to the transmission of any disease and are not regarded as a medical threat. *While bedbugs are not regarded as a vector of transmissible diseases,* they may be a significant source of stress, alarm and/or distress. Some individuals develop skin infections and scars from scratching bedbug bites.

How do bedbug infestations start?

There are several means by which dwellings can become infested with bedbugs. People can often acquire bedbugs at hotels, motels, and bed-and-breakfasts, bringing them back home in their luggage. *They also can pick them up by inadvertently bringing infested furniture or used clothing to their household. If someone is in a place that is severely infested, bedbugs may actually crawl onto and be carried by people's clothing, although this is an atypical behavior – except in the case of severe infestations, bedbugs are not usually carried from place to place by people on clothing they are currently wearing.*

Finally, bedbugs may travel between units in multi-unit dwellings (such as condominiums and apartment buildings), after being originally brought into the building by one of the above routes. This spread between units is dependent in part on the degree of infestation, and whether or not infested items are dragged through common areas while being disposed of, resulting in the shedding of bedbugs and bedbug eggs while being dragged.

How do bedbugs feed?

Bedbugs are generally active only at night, with a peak attack period about an hour before dawn, though given the opportunity; they may attempt to feed at other times of day.

Attracted by warmth and the presence of carbon dioxide, the bug pierces the skin. After feeding for about five minutes, the bug returns to its hiding place. The bites cannot usually be felt until some minutes or hours later, as a dermatological reaction to the injected agents. *Although bedbugs can live for up to 18 months without feeding, they typically seek blood every five to ten days.*

Bedbugs are often erroneously associated with filth. They are attracted by exhaled carbon dioxide, not by dirt, and they feed on blood, not waste. In short, the cleanliness of their environments has no effect on bedbugs.

Where is the common location of infestations?

Bedbugs are very flat, allowing them to hide in tiny crevices. A crack wide enough to fit the edge of a credit card can harbor bedbugs [even in the ceiling]. *In the daytime, they tend to stay out of the light*, hidden in such places as mattress seams, mattress interiors, bed frames, nearby furniture, carpeting, baseboards, or bedroom clutter. Bedbugs can settle in the open weave of linen; this will often appear as a gray spindle a centimeter long and a thread wide, with a dark speck in the middle.

Bedbugs can be found individually, but more often congregate in groups. They are not social insects, however, and do not build or stay in nests. These groups of bedbugs are very often found in beds, usually either in the seams of a mattress (usually the seams closest to the sleeper), in the box spring, or within the structure of the bed itself.

They can also be found in a wide variety of locations in a home, such as behind baseboards, behind a picture frame, within books (near the bed), in telephones or radios near the bed, and within the folds of curtains.

When not feeding, bedbugs are likely to be found hiding in shaded areas such as the seam along which the floor and wall meet, or under the edge of the carpet. *Bedbugs are capable of travelling as far as 100 feet to feed, but usually remain close to the host in bedrooms or on sofas where people may sleep.* They feed every five to 10 days.

The manner in which infestations spread throughout a home or within an apartment building is not entirely understood and differs from case to case. It is important to inspect all adjacent rooms for infestation, as bedbugs travel easily and quickly along pipes and boards.

In treatment, it is important to consider the insides of walls as potential places for bedbug infestation.

How do I detect bedbug infestations?

The most reliable way of detecting bedbug infestations is through the presence of bedbug feces, which can stain bedding.

Though bedbug bites can occur singly, they often follow a distinctive pattern of a linear group of three bites, sometimes macabrely referred to as "breakfast, lunch and dinner". These patterns of bites are caused when a bedbug is disturbed in feeding by a person moving, and then the bedbug resumes feeding. Bedbug bites also often occur in lines marking the paths of blood vessels running close to the surface of the skin. The effect of these bites on humans varies from person to person, but often cause welts and swelling that are more itchy and longer-lasting than mosquito bites. Some people, however, have little or no reaction to bedbug bites. Those whose bodies do not initially react may subsequently develop symptoms, however, due to an allergic reaction caused by the development of antigen. Bedbugs never crawl under one's skin and markings implying this may be signs of other skin infections or a severe allergic reaction to bedbug bites.

A technique for "catching" (detecting) bedbugs is to have a light source accessible from bed and to turn it on at about an hour before dawn, which is usually the time when bedbugs are most active. A flashlight is recommended instead of room lights, as the act of getting out of bed will cause any bedbugs present to scatter. Bedbugs can also sometimes be viewed during the day.

Some individuals have used glue traps placed in strategic areas around their home (sometimes used in conjunction with heating pads, or balloons filled with exhaled breath, thus offering the carbon dioxide that bedbugs look for) in order to attract and thus detect bedbug infestations. There are also commercial traps like "flea" traps whose effectiveness is really questionable except perhaps as a means of detection, but traps will certainly not work to control an infestation.

Perhaps the easiest method for detection is to place double sided carpet tape in long strips near or around the bed and check the strips after a day or more. This is also useful in detecting insect presence in general.

APPENDIX C: Overview of Bed Bugs Brent Johnson, Canadian Pest Control

They are primitive, nocturnal and highly adaptive. They have 5 stages of development from egg to adult bug. They need to feed to move through each life stage. The eggs are almost invisible, the adult looks like an apple seed.

The mouth has two structures, one injects an anaesthetic (so you don't feel the bite) the other part injects an anti-coagulant (so they can suck the blood).

They need a stationary food source - typically someone who is sleeping. This is very important for centres such as the GP, ESC and Carnegie. As we don't have people sleeping overnight here it is unlikely that we could have an infestation as has been happening in the hotels and rooming houses. Our problem will be with individual bugs that have been knocked off of their host.

They are slow moving and do not move away from their food source. The odd bugs we find would have been knocked off - they are not traveling in search of other blood supplies. If we see a bug we should kill it and once we do we have probably adequately dealt with the problem. (The caution from the health inspector is that if the bug has recently eaten and is engorged it could be a source of blood born infection - in this case we shouldn't squish it.)

They can adapt to the rhythms of their host - for example they will be active during the day if the host works night shift rather than at night.

They can adapt to temperature changes. If freezing is slow they will adapt to the change. Freezing alone will not kill bed bugs, they need to be frozen, then heated, frozen again and then heated again to effectively kill them.

The only time we need to be concerned about an infestation is if we see multiple bugs through various stages of their life cycle. In this situation we should do a careful check and cleaning and then a spot application of pesticide through Canadian Pest Control.

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Title: Dismantling of Transient Camps

Business Unit: Engineering Services

Effective Date: November 2016

Branch: STEOB

Revision Date: November 2017

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This Safe Operating Procedure (SOP) has been developed to ensure a standard procedure for the dismantling of transient camps in City of Vancouver property.

A transient camp is defined as any type of temporary structures (tents or other shelters) on City of Vancouver street right-of-way where camping equipment is stored, but may also include a gathering of other belongings such as clothing, backpacks, bicycles, unauthorized merchandise being sold, or drug paraphernalia.

II. HAZARD ANALYSIS / RISK ASSESSMENT

The following Safe Operating Procedure was developed from a Task Hazard Analysis conducted by Streets, Traffic and Electrical Operations Branch to control risks identified in Risk Assessment Dismantling of Transient Camps, located in the following VanDocs document: ENG - STEOB - OHS - Streets Risk Assessment.

III. ASSOCIATED HAZARDS

Common hazards associated with dismantling of transient camps include, but are not limited to:

- Angry and aggressive individuals
- Individuals under the influence of substances
- Individuals with mental issues
- Weapons, sharp objects
- Uneven terrain and tripping hazards
- Biohazards, insects, rodents
- Drug paraphernalia

Workers who dismantle transient camps and collect abandoned left garbage may be potentially exposed to potentially hazardous materials; appropriate handling and disposal practices must be followed.

Workers who dismantle transient camps and collect abandoned garbage may be potentially exposed to bed bugs. If a site is suspected to be infested with bed bugs, 'SOP: Controlling Exposure to Bed Bugs' must be followed.

IV. TOOLS/ EQUIPMENT/ MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Sharps container and forceps or pliers (6" or longer)
- Cutting tools
- Garbage bags/cans
- Litter pickers
- Pitch fork, rake, and shovel
- Wheelbarrows
- Grinder
- Caution Tape
- Tarps
- Traffic cones
- Hand sanitizer
- Truck
- City cell phone
- Two way portable radio contact - with National Yard Dispatch and active crews in the Engineering Department
- Warning notices

V. PREREQUISITES

A. Skills, Abilities & Knowledge

- Experience with Operations.
- Knowledge of handling and disposing of bio-hazardous materials.

- Knowledge and awareness of City of Vancouver Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan.
- Ability to deal with the public and more specifically with transients.
- Understanding of this procedure.

B. Training / Certification

- Transient Crew Orientation
- Violence Prevention: Service to Safety & Protest Management
- Security and Personal Awareness
- Blood Borne Pathogens
- Hazardous Materials Awareness
- WHMIS

***All new employees will be supervised accordingly.**

VI. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

- Safety footwear
- Safety glasses
- High visibility apparel with City of Vancouver inscription
- Puncture resistant gloves
- Tyvex suit (optional)
- Disposable respirator P95 (optional)

VII. PROCEDURE

WARNING: When approaching a camp for any reason (warning notice, investigation, or site clean-up and dismantling), a minimum of two people must attend. **DO NOT** approach any transient camp - occupied or unoccupied - alone.

The warning notice delivery, the investigation, and the site clean-up and dismantling will only occur during daylight hours.

1. Warning Notice

Transient Crew workers will respond to complaints from 3-1-1 as well as self-observed. If there is a temporary structure or an accumulation of unattended personal property in City of Vancouver property that is not in compliance with the City of Vancouver By-Law, the Crew will issue a warning notice to have the camp removed. Time is granted for the occupants to take their personal belongings. Community Services contact information is provided to them if required.

If there are no occupants at the time, the warning notice will be left at the camp in a visible spot.

Later the same day, Transient Crew workers will re-check the location to ensure the camp or the unattended personal properties have been removed.

The transient camp will be dismantled and a warning notice will not be issued if:

- The camp is a safety hazard for the public (e.g. infested with needles or feces); or
- There are neither occupants nor personal belongings (abandoned camp).

2. Investigation

The Crew Supervisor will assess the situation for safety before sending the crew to any transient camp site. This assessment will be completed with VPD presence if any risk to safety is assessed. The Crew Supervisor will:

- Assess the size of the camp site, how many occupants (if possible), and an accurate location. Additional information should include whether pets are present, other identifying features of the camp set up, and any warnings or verbal interaction with the occupants.
- Perform an initial visual assessment of the area to identify potentially dangerous conditions, such as unstable structures, discarded hypodermic needles, chemical containers, or rodent infestation.

3. Camp with Occupants

WARNING: If a campsite is occupied, do not approach or engage with the occupant(s). Call your Supervisor and wait for their instructions. VPD must be contacted for support before dealing with occupied camps where occupants do not want to leave. VPD must be present to ensure the camp is empty at the time of removal of the camp.

Chance encounters with transient people can happen anywhere. If a circumstance precipitates a verbal interaction with a transient camper:

- Extreme caution is necessary, as well as professionalism and courtesy when dealing with the public. However, **back away to your vehicle or a safe place and call 911 at any time that you feel threatened or in a hazardous situation.** Then call your Supervisor.
- Never enter a tent or other temporary structure.
- Identify who you are and why you are there.
- Do not touch or shake hands.
- Ask them specifically and clearly to dismantle their tent and to leave the area.
- Be polite and friendly. The primary objective is that the interaction between you and the transient person does not become confrontational. Keep conversation casual and do not provoke hostility. Smile, listen, and do not blame or judge.
- **Do not re-enter the area until the occupant(s) have been moved from the area completely or you are accompanied by VPD.**
- If you accidentally wake a transient camper, give them time to get focused. Start with a friendly greeting to make sure they hear you. Wait for a response. Disengage at the first opportunity where you can safely do so.
- Avoid carrying anything that looks like a weapon, such as umbrellas, large sticks, or flashlight. Avoid threatening gestures or body positioning (i.e. arms folded across your chest).
- Show concern. If you suspect the transient person is physically unwell or something else is wrong call 911.

- Maintain your “personal” space and ensure you have a clear escape route. Avoid getting backed into a corner.
- If animals are a concern, contact the Supervisor of Canine Services (Animal Services Dpt.). Do not proceed until the animal(s) are no longer a potential threat or hazard.

4. Camp with No Occupants

WARNING: Should the camp become occupied at any point during the dismantling of the site, immediately withdraw and revert to following the points outlined in “Camp with Occupants”.

When the camp has been abandoned, and there are no known hazards after completing a site inspection, the crew will be allowed to demolish, remove, and cleanup of the camp.

5. Site Clean-Up and Dismantling

WARNING: Change clothing or PPE after contact with potentially infected articles from the site (laundry service is available for Transient Crew workers if necessary). Disinfect hands and then wash them with warm soapy water as soon as possible.

WARNING: Suspected hazardous waste materials should be left on-site until the appropriate precautionary measures, collection, and disposal procedures have been determined. Before handling any abandoned material suspected to contain hazardous materials for which you are NOT trained, contact your supervisor for additional instructions.

NOTE: If needed, and the site can be accessed this way, the use of backhoes and trucks are a good option especially for larger camps. Whenever practicable, abandoned material should be collected and loaded for transport using mechanical equipment such as backhoes and loaders.

An extensive site inspection **MUST** be done by a trained and experienced staff member prior to dismantling or cleaning of the transient camp. The inspection will include:

- Identifying and safely disposing of all bio-hazards, such as hypodermic needles, fecal matter, and bodily fluids.
- Identifying if a site is infested with bed bugs (if a site is suspected to be infested with bed bugs, 'SOP: Controlling Exposure to Bed Bugs' must be followed).
- Identifying and addressing hazards, such as pits in the ground, ropes, razor blades, broken glass, other sharp objects, wires, or other visible hazards.
- Identifying any make shift washrooms or areas of refuse/feces/urine. If they are found, contact a remediation company for sanitizing the area (VPD should be able to provide the contact for the remediation company they work with if needed).
- Identifying hazardous materials. If the site is found containing suspicious hazardous materials, contact an Environmental Protection Officer (Environmental Services Dpt.) to further assess the site and to arrange the safe removal and disposal of the hazardous materials.
- Identifying fires and flammables. If fires, barbeques, propane tanks or similar are found on the site, contact the VFRS to have them safely removed.

After the site inspection is completed and the hazards have been removed or sanitized, the crew will then begin to clean and dismantle the transient camp:

- Complete a visual inspection prior to entering the transient camp.
- Check for needles on site and remove needles following the *SOP: Abandoned Needle Pickup*.
- Approach closer to the abandoned material and attempt to visually identify the material items before handling them. Never open waste containers or bags to inspect their contents; it increases the risk of exposure or injury.
- Direct hand contact with the waste material should be avoided whenever possible. DO NOT handle refuse with bare hands. Always wear puncture resistant gloves.
- Pick up any refuse left on site using the appropriate tool (forks, rakes, shovels, tarps, paper picker "tongs", garbage bags) and PPE as required.
- Whenever possible, minimize handling garbage bags and dispose of collected abandoned waste directly to the back of the truck using the appropriate tool (forks, rakes, shovels, tarps, paper picker "tongs").

- Perform a test lift to determine if the objects can be safely lifted manually and that the waste container / bag will not fail during handling. Do not place your hands underneath the waste material; this increases the risk of puncture injury.
- Hold bags from the top only.
- Tie bags up in a way you can visually identify what is in there before handling the bag.
- Do not carry garbage bags against your body or compress bags with hands or feet, as sharp objects may cut you. Use plastic garbage cans, rubber containers or waste receptacles, wheelbarrows, or other tools that keeps bags of waste away from your body.
- Transport and dispose of the collected abandoned waste in a suitable location which limits the need for additional manual handling.
- Keep bed linen away from your body. Do not crowd it into your body to haul, or to lift items over the sides of your vehicle.
- Try not to stand down wind when loading the truck. Use of disposable respirator (P95) when close to debris being loaded.
- Discard all materials removed from site to the garbage bin at National Yard. The garbage bin is emptied twice per day by Sanitation.
For larger camps, all materials removed from site will be sent directly to the landfill.
- Leave the site in a safe condition.

NOTE: Always consult your Supervisor if unsure of how to perform clean-up safely.

6. Decontamination Precautions

Avoid contaminating vehicle. After each clean-up and before entering your vehicle, always brush off clothing, wipe shoes, and clean hands. Once at the yard, wash thoroughly the vehicle box and the outside of the truck at the wash rack to prevent further contamination.

At times, after visiting and dismantling a site, you may need to take decontamination precautions. These may include:

- Cleaning your tools/ equipment.

- Disposing gloves or other PPE.
- Cleaning and/or changing your clothes (laundry service available).
- Washing your hands or showering.

7. Recovered Items

WARNING: If there is a concern of needles or contamination, the transient items will not be kept; they will be disposed of at the garbage bin at National Yard.

Items from the cleanup that camp occupants specifically mentioned they would like to reclaim (mostly suitcases, bags, and backpacks) will be brought to National Yard and placed in the Transient Crew cage. Transient items will be held for 30 days to give the owners a chance to reclaim their items. If items are not reclaimed in the allotted time, they will be sent to the landfill.

An appointment must be made with the Crew Supervisor through 3-1-1 to reclaim the items.

VIII. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a serious medical emergency, contact 911 and advise the operator of the situation and your location. Contact the designated site first aid attendant and the Crew Supervisor for assistance. Contact the Superintendent to advise them of the incident.

In the event of difficulties on the job that may pose a safety hazard, contact the Supervisor or Superintendent for further instructions via radio or cell phone.

IX. REFERENCES

WorkSafeBC Regulation.

City of Vancouver. Street and Traffic By-Law No. 2849.

STEOB -SOP: *Abandoned Needle Pickup*. Feb 2003. Revised: February, 2015.

STEOB -SOP: *Controlling Exposure to Bed Bugs*. Sep 2017.

City of Vancouver. *Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan*. 2015.

X. CONTROL CHANGES

Review	Description of change	Revision Date
1	Creation	Nov 2016
2	Included reference to potentially exposure to bed bugs	Sep 2017
3	<i>'Site Clean-Up and Dismantling - make shift washrooms or areas of refuse/feces/urine'</i> : Replaced reference to Vancouver Coastal Health for sanitizing the area with reference to a remediation company. Included in the document specific mention to only dismantling camps in City of Vancouver property.	Nov 2017

XI. SIGN-OFF

Approved by:

Ken Brown	Signature:
STEOB Manager	Date:

* bicycles only *

Streets crews often come across abandoned items or belongings, or they are called by Police to remove items or belongings. These items are seized and brought back to National Works Yard. The seized items are held for a period of 30 days. The majority of these seized items belong to homeless people, and they may come in to National Yard to get them back. Occasionally bicycles will be removed from public places and brought back to National Yard for storage.

Walk in:

During regular business hours - 7:00am – 15:30pm Monday to Friday– If a citizen shows up at National Yard asking for their belongings; call the following people in this order in an attempt to assist them:

1. Stu McMillan s.15(1)(l)
2. Frank Dailly
3. Jeff Eckland

NEVER GIVE OUT THESE NUMBERS

Citizens can get easily angered and frustrated. Try to keep the person informed as to what actions you are taking to assist them, and kindly ask them to wait outside while you arrange for assistance. If an immediate safety concern arises, call Police for assistance.

If a person comes to claim items afterhours, weekends, or statutory holidays – do not allow access to the building, utilize the windows or the intercom. Direct them to contact 3-1-1 so that they can make an appointment during regular hours.

Call In:

If someone calls the City Line (604) 871-6200 to retrieve their belongings, they will need to set up an appointment with one of the members of the contact list. Security will have to get the persons information for a return call or, keep them on hold and use another line to contact Stu McMillan and set up an appointment to come in to pick up the item/s. Do not give the phone numbers to the individuals calling in.

Bicycles:

If a person's bicycle has been removed from a public structure, and they wish to claim it back, they will be directed to contact 3-1-1. The 3-1-1 operators have been directed to inform citizens that they will need to make an appointment with one of the Streets clean-up crew members during regular business hours to claim their bicycle. Note: if only parts of a bicycle (eg; frame only) have been removed, 3-1-1 has been directed to inform the caller that the City will not store these items, they will be recycled.

Garbage:

When a request for homeless debris / abandoned garbage removal comes in from 3-1-1, VPD, or a citizen, it is essential to determine if this is actually a person's belongings or actual garbage. If the call turns out to be regarding garbage pick-up, Sanitation should be contacted. If the call pertains to a civilian's personal belongings, COV staff will pick-up and store the items only during regular business hours. VPD have a storage facility where they can hold belongings if needed.