

East Cambs. Street Scene Ltd. (ECSS)

Safe System of Work SSOW 03: Waste Collections

Date Issued:	June 2020 (Last reviewed June 2026)
Reviewed By:	
Next Review Date:	June 2028

1. Activity

This Safe System of Work provides information on the collection of waste from domestic premises in sacks or wheeled containers.

2. Persons at Risk

Loaders

Drivers

Public (especially children, persons visually / hearing impaired)

Other road users (vehicles, cyclists etc.)

3. Hazards

- Weight of bins
- Bin contents – unknown
- Movement of bins on uneven ground, down steps
- Violence from members of the public
- Dogs
- Glass, hypodermic needles
- Tetanus
- Uneven surfaces, raised paving slabs
- Contact with moving vehicle
- Contact with Lifting, Tipping and Compaction Equipment
- Fire on vehicle
- Inclement weather, ice, snow, rain, fog
- Darkness during winter months
- Materials ejected from back of hopper as plate crushes contents
- Presence of bees and wasps and risk of stings
- Vehicles and cycles

4. Procedures

a. Sacks

General

- Handle bags with care as they may contain sharp objects.

- Don't carry too many bags at once.
- Be aware that the bags may suddenly split and spill the contents.

How to handle bags:

- Get close to the load, don't over reach.
- Check the weight, condition.
- Have one foot forward.
- Unlock the knees.
- Get a firm grip of the load from the top.
- Lift with the legs.
- Move your feet to turn – don't twist your body.
- Carry a similar weight in each hand.
- Only carry what you can comfortably manage.
- Watch out for obstacles whilst walking with the bags.
- Never throw a bag into hopper by holding the base of the bag.

b. Wheeled bins

- Waste should not be routinely removed by manual lifting from wheeled bins.
- When wheeling a bin from its storage place across public highways or thoroughfares, care must be taken not to put the public at risk (remember the old, infirm, non/partially sighted and disabled persons).
- After emptying a bin return it to the original location. Never leave it where someone is likely to fall over it or it is blocking an accessway (remember wind can move empty bins).
- Never take short cuts across property or open space or think it's a quicker route back to the rest of the crew.
- Where applicable doors and gates must be closed after use.
- Do not attempt to tip containers with defects that will affect the safe disposal operation. Report any container defects to an Assistant Manager.
- Do not use a bin of the wrong size for the lifting mechanism.

c. Food Caddies

- When carrying a food caddy from its storage place across public highways or thoroughfares, care must be taken not to put the public at risk (remember the old, infirm, non/partially sighted and disabled persons).
- After emptying a bin return it to the original location. Place the container, never throw or leave it where someone is likely to fall over it or it is blocking an accessway (remember wind can move empty bins).

- Never take short cuts across property or open space or think it's a quicker route back to the rest of the crew.
- Where applicable doors and gates must be closed after use.
- Do not attempt to tip containers with defects that will affect the safe disposal operation. Report any container defects to an Assistant Manager.

How to handle food caddies:

- Get close to the load, don't over reach.
- Check the weight, condition.
- Have one foot forward.
- Unlock the knees.
- Get a firm grip of the load from the top.
- Lift with the legs.
- Move your feet to turn – don't twist your body.
- Carry a similar weight in each hand.
- Only carry what you can comfortably manage.
- Watch out for obstacles whilst walking with the caddies.
- Take care when emptying the caddy into the service bin or trough

d. Loading

- Only trained employees and agency staff must use the bin lift equipment. Loaders must understand the operation of the bin lift/compaction controls including the location of the emergency stop buttons.
- Incorrect use of the bin lifting equipment could cause serious injury and must be treated with care. Always adhere to the operating instructions.
- Do not wear loose clothing, which could catch in the mechanism.
- Ensure that the barrier arms are fully extended and the lift mechanism is set to automatic.
- Never enter the area between the barrier arms whilst the vehicle is running and the lift mechanism is engaged and able to function. Before operation commences make sure no other operative or members of the public are in the immediate area of the lifting device.
- Ensure the bin handles are held comfortably. The Loader must stand behind the bin and move the bin towards the lift so that the bin is always between the Loader and the moving parts of the lifting mechanism. Always approach the lifting mechanism with the bin between you and the lifting equipment. Never approach the mechanism from the side.

- Ensure that the bin is not overloaded and the lid is shut. Before tipping the bin the Loader must always ensure the bin lift bin clamps are properly clamped onto the bin lip and secure the bin correctly.
- Always ensure the lifting bin clamps are firmly locked onto the bin
- The Loader must release his/her hands from the bin as soon as the lift cycle starts and immediately takes 3 steps back and 1 step to side (this is called the SAFE ZONE) away from the bin lifts and out of the lifting arc ensuring you do not step into the live traffic lane. Wherever possible always use the pedestrian or verge when stepping to the side. If this cannot be achieved then take a further step back.
- Always maintain eye contact with the bin whilst also being vigilant for members of public coming into the area who may be risk. Never leave a lifting bin.
- The Loader must wait until the emptying cycle has completely finished and the lifter has deposited the bin back on the ground before attempting to remove the bin, again putting both hands on the bin handles.
- The Loader must not deposit refuse into the hopper of the vehicle whilst the compaction cycle is in progress.
- Do not tip bins when the vehicle is in motion.
- Crew members must not attempt to remove spilled waste from the lifting mechanism unless the emergency stops are activated.
- In the event of a container or other object becoming stuck in or on the lifting mechanism, operatives must not attempt to recover the object but must advise the driver and contact your Line Manager immediately and return to depot if safe to do so.
- Wherever possible do not allow other persons to throw anything into the rear of the vehicle. Do not put hot items of refuse or lighted matches into the hopper.
- Do not tip bins if the compactor mechanism is faulty. Report defects immediately.
- In the event of mechanical failure of the lifting and tipping equipment report direct to your driver. Under no circumstances should the loaders attempt to affect a repair or make any mechanical adjustments to the mechanism. This is a job for the maintenance provider.
- Spillage must be cleaned up immediately.

- If a hazard is created, positive steps must be taken to ensure that all who could be endangered have their attention drawn to the hazard at the time of the incident.
- Walk, **do not run**, slow and steady gets the round finished safely. Always take the safest route, which may not always be the shortest route.

d. Travelling

- Crew members may only ride within the cab of the vehicle, using the seats and seatbelts **MUST** be worn.
- Riding on the back, or on any other outside part of a refuse vehicle is strictly forbidden as this could endanger the operative, motorists and members of the public.
- Crew members must not leave the vehicle whilst in motion.
- Three points of contact must be maintained at all times whilst accessing and egressing from the vehicle.

e. Reversing

- Reversing – trained crew members are required to act as a Reversing Assistants in all reversing maneuvers.

f. Other

- Where anything is damaged, or a member of staff is threatened or injured during the course of their work, full details must be reported to your Line Manager immediately and on round completion an investigation will commence.

5. General Guidance

- The Driver is the Team Leader and crew members must carry out any reasonable instruction.

6. Personal Protective Equipment

- Some clothing is issued as uniform however the following is PPE and must be worn:
 - Protective footwear (with steel cap toes);
 - Ballistic trousers;
 - Hi-Viz top;
 - Gloves (for bag collections).

Additional clothing may be provided for specific weather or safety protection.

7. Medical Requirements/Vaccinations

- Post incident vaccinations for Tetanus & Hepatitis B.
- A first aid box will be kept on each vehicle.
- If an employee receives an injury from a hypodermic needle and the needle breaks leaving part of the needle in the skin, he/she should go immediately to hospital A&E. If the needle causes an injury, but does not stay in the skin, encourage the wound to bleed but do not suck the blood out. Clean the area with soap and water or if this is not available with an antiseptic wipe from the First Aid kit. An employee must always go to hospital as soon as possible after a needle stick injury.
- When the first Aid kit used it is the drivers responsibility to ensure the provisions are restock and any usage must be recorded on an accident or near miss form.

8. Training

Training includes:

- Safe Systems of Work at Induction;
- Manual Handling;
- Vehicle Reversing;
- Controls and use of bin lifts;
- First Aid;
- In house training on safe working practices.
- Monthly Tool Box Talks

Relevant Related Documents - SSOW-03 Waste Collections		
Code of Practices:	COP 01 PPE COP 03 Accident & Near Miss reporting COP 04 COSHH COP 06 Driving at Work COP 08 First Aid COP 10 Health Surveillance COP 12 LOLER COP 14 Monitoring & Measuring Health & Safety COP 15 Noise at Work COP 16 Sharp	COP 17 Smoke Free Workplace COP 18 Risk Assessments COP 23 Working on the Highway COP 24 Manual Handling COP 25 Mobile Phone Use COP 26 Vehicle Accident Management (Driver Policy) COP 26 Annex A – Bump Card (Vehicle Accident Management) COP 27 Vehicle Hire (Management Process) COP 28 Bridge Strikes (Driver Policy)
Safe Systems of Work:	SSOW-01 General Requirements – Waste Collections SSOW-03 Waste Collections SSOW-04 Driving of Company Vehicles (Waste & Street Cleansing) SSOW-06 COSHH SSOW-07 First Aid Arrangements SSOW-08 LOLER SSOW-09 PPE	SSOW-10 Avoidance of Needle-Stick Injuries SSOW-11 Dealing with Confrontational Situations SSOW-12 Household Hazardous Waste SSOW-13 Manual Handling SSOW-15 Washing Vehicles SSOW-17 Opening and closing gates SSOW-18 Access and Egress
Risk Assessments:	RA-01 Waste Collections RA-04 Working at the depot RA-12 Bin Lifting Operations RA-13 Hazardous waste collections RA-14 Washing of vehicles RA-15 Access & Egress RA-16 Opening and closing of gates RA-17 Ballistic trousers RA-19 Entry into RCV RA-21 General Health	RA-22 Green Waste Sacks RA-24 Manual Handling RA-25 Noise in Recycling RA-27 Young Persons put to work RA-28 Safety Footwear RA-29 Vehicle checks & driver maintenance RA-30 Vehicle driving – disposal sites RA-31 Vehicle driving public highway RA-32 Wheeled bin collections
Tool Box Talks	TBT-01 Asbestos TBT-02 Attitude and Behaviour TBT-03 COSHH TBT-04 Falls from Height TBT-05 Fuel and Oil TBT-06 Heat Exhaustion and Sunstroke TBT-07 Hi Viz Clothing TBT-08 Horse Play at Work TBT-09 Hot Weather Working TBT-11 Manual Handling TBT-12 Needing the Toilet while at work TBT-13 Slips Trips and Falls TBT-14 PPE REGs 192-2022 TBT-15 PPE TBT-16 Pressure Washer Safety TBT-17 Safety in the Absence of Risk TBT-18 Access and Egress TBT-19 Driving at Work TBT-20 Driving in Depots TBT-21 Updated Highway Code 2022	TBT-22 Overloading Vehicles TBT-23 Driving Under the Influence of Drugs and alcohol TBT-24 Refuelling Safely TBT-25 Reversing Assistant TBT-26 Winter Driving TBT-27 Wearing Seat Belts TBT-28 Working in Low Light Conditions TBT-29 Gifts and Hospitality TBT-30 Smoking at work TBT-31 O License Management TBT-32 Keeping the Public Safe TBT-33 Sharps TBT-34 First Aid Arrangements TBT-35 Substance Misuse & Testing Arrangements TBT-36 Lifting Operations & LLOER TBT-37 Accident & Near Miss Reporting TBT-38 Driver – Vehicle Checks and Defects Reporting TBT-39 Driver – Driving Hours and WTD
Delivery/briefing method:		Briefing/Issue