



Emmet County Recycling



**How Getting Up to Speed with Safety
Regulations
Was
Preparation for the Covid-19 Outbreak**

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A look at Emmet County Recycling & Transfer Station 2019



Transfer Station

4 attendants-69,916 Transactions

MRF

15 processors-11,000 tons

Curbside/Drop Site Recycling

3 Curbside Drivers -154,951 Pick ups

2 Drop Site Drivers

Compost

Food Scraps -292 Tons

Household Hazardous Waste

3 Events Annually

Bulky Materials Drop off



Our Safety Regulations Starting Point October 2019

Assessment of current safety culture

- Safety Audit by insurance company
- Research for previous training and documentation



Our Safety Regulations Starting Point October 2019

Safety Audit Response

- 10 hour OSHA training for Director, Operations Supervisor and myself
- Training and documentation begins
- Begin implementation of audit recommendation around the facility



Our Safety Regulations Starting Point October 2019

Does it have the “potential” to happen?



5 Newly Created Safety Regulations

1. Safety culture understood and accepted
2. Facility walk-throughs
3. PPE training and documentation
4. Blood Borne Pathogens training
5. Crisis Response Plan



Safety culture understood and accepted ...after challenges

Challenges

- Long term employees immune to danger
- No prior history of accidents
- Uncomfortable
- Burdensome on budget

Acceptance

- Leaders
 - Bump Cap
 - Safety Glasses
- Covid 19
- Long for the “good old days”
- New Employee Orientation



Monthly Facility Inspection

- General Housekeeping
- PPE
- Eye Wash/First Aid Stations
- Ladders
- Fire Extinguishers
- Exit Signs/Lighting
- Look for the “potential”
- COVID-19 Response



PPE

- Hazard Site Assessment
 - Helpful to be new to industry
 - One size does not fit all
- Training and Documentation
 - Have your reasons ready
 - Follow up through inspections
- COVID-19 effect on PPE



Blood Borne Pathogens & First Aid Training

- Third Party Administrator-All staff training
- Third Party Administrator-Template for Exposure Control Plan
- First Aid Training-Online & Emmet County EMS
- Sharps Disposal with local hospital
- COVID-19 Medical waste decisions
 - No curbside pickup of medical facilities mixed containers
 - No curbside pickup of residential medical waste



Emergency Crisis Response Plan

- County's Plan was not site specific
- Template from Sheriff's Department
- Eye-opening
- Crisis Command Team Training
- MOU
- Critical for COVID-19 response



Covid-19 Outbreak
at
Emmet County Recycling



Timeline

Friday, March 13	3:13 p.m.	Emmet County Directive: Safety Protocol; No travel
Tuesday, March 16	7:30 a.m.	Notified temp agencies of new safety protocol
Wednesday, March 17	3:30 p.m.	Recycle curbside driver feels ill
Thursday, March 18	11:30 a.m.	Recycle curbside driver diagnosed with pneumonia, given antibiotics, tested for Covid-19
Friday, March 20	7:00 a.m.	Suspended mixed container collection due to inability to social distance 6 ft. on sort line
Saturday, March 21	9:30 a.m.	Recycle curbside driver reports medicine working. Feels better.
Saturday, March 21	11:43 a.m.	Recycle curbside driver reports he is positive for Covid-19



Timeline

Saturday, March 21	11:45 a.m.-12:25 p.m.
Received call from curbside driver	
Notified Emmet County Administrator	
Traveled to Transfer Station and notified employees	
Grabbed Employee Emergency Contact list	
Handwritten notes on gate and gatehouse "Temporarily Closed"	
Locked down Transfer Station	
Left	



Timeline

Saturday, March 21 to Monday, March 23

Worked with Northwest Michigan Health Department to trace contact with driver

Those in 14 day self-quarantine:

Myself

Operations Supervisor

All 3 Recycle Curbside Drivers

1 Drop-site Driver

1 Transfer Station Attendant

1 Recycle Processor



Timeline

Monday, March 23

Transfer Station shut down

Transfer Station and trucks cleaned to CDC recommended level

Processing side shut down

Curbside recycling stops due to all curbside drivers on quarantine

Recycle drop-sites stay open and available including mixed containers

Dispatch drop-site drivers; direct Transfer Station operations from home in self-quarantine



Timeline

Tuesday, March 24	Transfer Station opened; building remains closed
Wednesday, March 25	Processing side opens; process cardboard
Thursday, March 26	Processor employee creates barriers for social distancing on mixed container sort line
Tuesday, March 31	Processing fully open. Processing cardboard, paper, and mixed containers
Wednesday, April 1	Self-quarantined staff return; building fully open
Monday, April 6	Full Curbside service resumes; Frost Laws lifted





Safety Protocol Takeaways

- Mindset
- Priority
- One step at a time
- Adopt the C.A.S.E. method



COVID- 19 Takeaways

Leadership from Emmet County conveyed employee first approach. Shut down & cleaning of facility; options of PPE eased anxiety.

Communicating factual information essential

Use of social media and local news created a honest but positive dialog

Dual stream allowed continuance of fiber line while mixed containers closed to put engineering controls in place

Technology, like robots, would have allowed continuance of all materials during pandemic outbreak

Commitment to state/national supply chain of recyclables forefront when creating timeline to bring facility to full production.



Conclusion

Our newly created OSHA safety procedures placed us in the correct position to respond immediately & swiftly to contain the virus when an employee tested positive to Covid-19

It is possible, with the correct PPE, administrative and engineering controls, to operate the recycling and transfer station at full capacity

Communication and involvement of employees were essential in developing creative solutions and buy-in

Flexibility to adapt to daily changes is essential



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