

MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF ARGYLE POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION MANUAL	REFERENCE NUMBER _____
SECTION ADMINISTRATION	SUBJECT STORMS or HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS

1. TITLE

- 1.1. This policy is entitled the “Storms or Hazardous Conditions”

2. STATEMENT

- 2.1. Municipal Government Offices and Facilities will normally remain open during storms or hazardous conditions. Employees are expected to make every effort to report for work and remain at their workstations during their scheduled working hours. With the exception of those employees who provide designated services as defined in this policy, employees should assess their own ability to get to and from work safely and where possible consult with their department head. Employees may make a personal decision to take time off.
- 2.2. In exceptional circumstances, a decision may be made to close some or all offices or work sites, due to extreme storm or hazardous conditions. In only those situations will affected employees and managers be granted leave with pay for their regularly scheduled work hours.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. Employee – all full time, salaried, non-hourly paid, permanent, seasonal or casual employees of the Municipality of Argyle.
- 3.2. Department Head – designated managers of the respected Departments.
- 3.3. Designated Services – Services determined by the department heads to be essential or unique in their nature to ensure the safety of the public and environment. Employees who provide these services may be asked to continue to monitor their facilities or remain at their workstation if possible, even if the office or work sites were closed under this policy.
- 3.4. Storms – Adverse weather conditions such as heavy snowfall, hurricane or blizzard conditions.
- 3.5. Hazardous Conditions – Conditions, often resulting from a storm, that may include power outages, advisories from Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal on the use of public highways, and/or advisories from Police, Emergency Management Office or other agencies.
- 3.6. Exceptional Circumstances – declared state of emergency or condition deemed by the employer to be sufficiently dangerous or disruptive to require the closure of offices or discontinuance of normal business.

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4. OBJECTIVES

- 4.1. To acknowledge the need for employees to make reasonable assessments of their ability to travel to and from work safely during storms or hazardous conditions and to reaffirm their role in making individual decisions about such matters.
- 4.2. To ensure a consistent understanding and application of leaves requested by employees for absence due to storms or hazardous conditions.
- 4.3. To ensure a consistent understanding that municipal offices and facilities will only be closed under extreme circumstances.

5. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 5.1. Municipal offices and facilities will normally remain open during storms or hazardous conditions. Employees are expected to make every effort to report for duty and to remain at their workstation during their normal scheduled work hours.
- 5.2. With the exception of those employees who provide designated services as defined in this policy, employees should assess their own ability to get to and from work safely and where possible, consult their department head.
- 5.3. Employees may make their own decision to take time off. In such circumstances time lost by an employee as a result of absence due to storm or hazardous conditions may:
 - a) be made up by the employee at a time agreed upon between the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor, or
 - b) be charged to the employee's accumulated vacation, unused sick time, (maximum 2 day per calendar year), or accumulated overtime where such an entitlement exists, or
 - c) be taken as leave without pay.
- 5.4. Provisions (a), (b), and (c) shall also apply in situations where a municipal office or worksite has not been closed in accordance with this policy but remains physically unopened because of a decision by staff at that worksite to take time off. In these situations, where there has been no decision made to close the municipal office or worksite, employees will be required to make up or charge time lost to accumulated leave, according to the provisions noted above. Employees who arrive at the worksite and are unable to gain access are directed to contact their immediate supervisor for instructions. Having attempted to report for work, these employees may be granted paid leave. It is expected departments will develop guidelines to further address these types of situations, as appropriate.

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- 5.5. Where advance preparation for the possibility of closure includes consideration of the option of working from home, and where this option has been pre-approved by the immediate supervisor, such time shall serve as worked time.
- 5.6. Reasonable lateness beyond the beginning of an employee's regular shift starting time, as determined by the immediate supervisor, shall not be subject to provisions (a), (b), and (c) above where the employee is able to establish to the satisfaction of the immediate supervisor the every reasonable effort has been made by the employee to arrive at their work site at the scheduled time.
- 5.7. The employer (as represented by the immediate supervisor or manager) may, in the event of storm conditions or because of the condition of public streets and highways, and in circumstances where it can be accommodated within operational requirements, determine it appropriate to allow employees to leave work prior to the end of their regular shift. Employees will not be required to make up this time.

6. CLOSURE OF MUNICIPAL OFFICES OR WORKSITES

- 6.1. In exceptional circumstances, a decision may be made to close some or all municipal offices or worksites, due to extreme storm or hazardous conditions. In only those situations will affected employees be granted leave with pay for their regularly scheduled work hours.
- 6.2. In recognition that weather and other condition will differ from one region of the municipality to another, it may be appropriate for municipal offices or worksites in one or more communities to close while others remain open.
- 6.3. Employees who are asked to remain at work during an office closure as defined in 3.3 shall be granted time off in lieu.
- 6.4. When a decision to close offices or worksites in one or more community, the CAO shall make the closure decision. Should the CAO not be available the Director of Public Works and the Director of Finance shall be responsible to communicate and determine a potential closure. The Director of Public Works shall advise the CAO of a closure recommendation and, disseminate the decision.
- 6.5. All closure decisions shall be communicated in accordance with guidelines developed under this policy, in a timely fashion as circumstances permit.
- 6.6. Until and unless employees have been informed of a closure through the municipal website, through email or other notice from the CAO, by their immediate supervisor, or through the media, they are advised to assume business as usual and to act in accordance with this policy.

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7. POLICY GUIDELINES

7.1. When deciding to close municipal offices or worksites, the following will be considered:

- a) local weather forecasts and conditions.
- b) Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal road reports.
- c) the presence or threat of other safety hazards.
- d) special measures authorized by the Emergency Management Office. (e.g., state of emergency)
- e) other available information and agency advisories.
- f) closure of our neighboring municipal units in the tri-county area.
- g) Departments may issue guidelines, to assist in the implementation and administration of this policy and to facilitate consistency of this policy.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY

- 8.1. Employees - Employees are responsible for acting in accordance with this policy.
- 8.2. Immediate Supervisors/Managers - Immediate supervisors/managers are responsible for ensuring that employees are informed of this policy and for ensuring its fair and consistent application in their respective worksites.
- 8.3. Department Heads – Department Heads are responsible for the timely designation of services for which employees who provide them are required to report to or remain at work in the event of municipal office or worksite closures under this policy.
- 8.4. Department Heads are also responsible for the fair and consistent application of this policy within their departments, as well as the delegation of responsibility for communication of closure decisions, as required.
- 8.5. The Chief Administration Officer (CAO) - Except as otherwise provided for in this policy, the CAO is responsible for making the decision to close all municipal offices or worksites in the event of extreme storms, hazardous conditions, or exceptional circumstances. The CAO is responsible for initiating the broad communication of closure decisions, in accordance with guidelines developed under this policy.
- 8.6. The CAO along with other department heads, is also responsible for the fair and consistent application of the policy across all municipal departments.

9. MONITORING

- 9.1. The CAO, in consultation with the JOHSC Committee, is responsible for monitoring the

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effectiveness and the consistent application of this policy and may periodically require audits of departmental practices.

10. MORNING OFFICE CLOSURES

- 10.1.** If extreme weather or hazardous conditions occur over night, the CAO will recommend action with respect to all municipal offices or worksite closures by 7:00 AM.

11. CLOSURE REASSESSMENT

- 11.1.** If hazardous conditions persist or diminish during the day, the CAO will re-evaluate local conditions by 11:00 AM and report to all municipal offices or worksites.
- 11.2.** By 11:30 AM, the CAO will report a recommendation to close or re-open municipal offices or worksites. If offices are to re-open, employees will be notified of when they are expected to report to work.

12. COMMUNICATION

- 12.1.** Upon deciding to close municipal offices or worksites, the CAO will contact department heads before 7:00 AM for morning closures, and before 12 noon for afternoon closures or re-openings.
- 12.2.** Once notified of a closure, department heads will activate their respective internal communication plans.

13. DIRECT COMMUNICATION TO STAFF

- 13.1.** It is expected that within their respective business continuity plans, department heads will include a plan for communication with the departmental staff in the event of all municipal offices or worksites, and processes for the designation of services as required.

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Chief Administrative Officers' Annotation for Official Policy Book

Date of Notice to Council Members

Of Intent to Consider [7 days minimum]: January 21, 2020

Date of Passage of Current Policy:

I certify that this Policy was adopted by Council as indicated above.

Warden

Date

Chief Administrative Officer

Date