



City of Bowling Green

Internal Auditor's Office

Park Maintenance Operational Audit

Project# 2013-12

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Deborah Jenkins, CFE, CICA

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Observations and Recommendations

1. **Weekly Work Reports should be consistently completed if the reports are what management plans to rely on for analysis and evaluations of efficiencies within the division. No management reporting or analysis is performed from the reports to identify inefficiencies or problem areas within the division.**
2. **Park Maintenance management should implement a robust work order system to provide effective tracking and reporting of maintenance costs of equipment as well as maintenance costs relative to park locations.**
3. **Park Maintenance management needs to analyze the cost drivers of weekend overtime to maximize the use of resources and effectively coordinate employees for the duties performed outside of the normal work week.**
4. **Monthly inspections should be completed as required by the City of Bowling Green's Risk Management Manual and documented on related inspection forms created by Risk Management.**
5. **Park Maintenance needs to develop a method that will track transfer of assets to different locations or City divisions. In addition, any unused and broken, sold or traded in assets should be appropriately documented and surplus.**
6. **Small tools, equipment and inventory need a divisional approval process and division wide coordination for purchases. An inventory system should be implemented to assist management in creating an accountable system for parts and inventory.**
7. **The Park Maintenance Division should study the use of staff time during winter months and evaluate how the staff can be best utilized.**
8. **The Park Maintenance Division should develop a written Policy and Procedure Manual to standardize and document the multiple responsibilities of this division, as well as to move closer to the departmental wide goal of obtaining accreditation by a national park association.**

Attachment A- Chapter 13 of *Handbook for General Law Village Officials*

Transmittal Letter

TO: Kevin D. DeFebbo, City Manager, Ex-officio Member
Cristi Pruitt, Audit Committee Chair
David McKillip, Audit Committee Vice-Chair
Tony Witty, Audit Committee Member
Scott Gary, Audit Committee Member
Joe Denning, Commissioner and Audit Committee Member

CC: Brent Belcher, Director of Parks and Recreation

Pursuant to the approved 2012/2013 Internal Audit Plan, I hereby submit the Park Maintenance Operational Audit. The objective of this audit is to evaluate the adequacy of internal controls as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of operations related to: 1.) payroll; 2.) equipment, small tools and parts inventory management; 3.) work order and construction project management; 4.) general shop operations. This report includes background information to assist the reader in understanding processes of the Park Maintenance Division. The body of the report consists of observations, recommendations and management's responses to the recommendations.

Results in Brief

The payroll and timekeeping system used by the entire Parks Department is the most accountable system within the City government. There are some non-material issues that were found and are being addressed; however, the Parks Department should be recognized for being the leader in the City for their timekeeping software and for striving to be accountable for all employees time at work. The Parks Department volunteered to be the test department for an upgrade to their existing Timeclock software, as well as a new project that will upload employee time to our financial and payroll system. This system upgrade and effort by the Parks Department and the Information Technology Department is working to implement this timekeeping system throughout all City departments.

However, the audit did identify several areas in which Park Maintenance operations can be improved. Eight (8) recommendations are identified within this report to strengthen internal controls within the division. The recommendations are as follows:

- 1. Weekly Work Reports should be consistently completed if the reports are what management plans to rely on for analysis and evaluations of efficiencies within the division. No management reporting or analysis is performed from the reports to identify inefficiencies or problem areas within the division.**
- 2. Park Maintenance management should implement a robust work order system to provide effective tracking and reporting of maintenance costs of equipment as well as maintenance costs relative to park locations.**
- 3. Park Maintenance management needs to analyze the cost drivers of weekend overtime to maximize the use of resources and effectively coordinate employees for the duties performed outside of the normal work week.**
- 4. Monthly inspections should be completed as required by the City of Bowling Green's Risk Management Manual and documented on related inspection forms created by Risk Management.**

- 5. Park Maintenance needs to develop a method that will track transfer of assets to different locations or City divisions. In addition, any unused and broken, sold or traded in assets should be appropriately documented and surplus.**
- 6. Small tools, equipment and inventory need a divisional approval process and division wide coordination for purchases. An inventory system should be implemented to assist management in creating an accountable system for parts and inventory.**
- 7. The Park Maintenance Division should study the use of staff time during winter months and evaluate how the staff can be best utilized.**
- 8. The Park Maintenance Division should develop a written Policy and Procedure Manual to standardize and document the multiple responsibilities of this division, as well as to move closer to the departmental wide goal of obtaining accreditation by a national park association.**

It was a pleasure working with the employees throughout the Park Maintenance Division. Their cooperation and assistance was greatly appreciated. Park management has demonstrated openness to new approaches and ideas to develop more effective and efficient park systems.

Sincerely,

Deborah Jenkins, CFE, CICA
Internal Auditor

Background

The Parks Maintenance Division is responsible for maintaining park grounds, City cemeteries, most of their own equipment, as well as several Parks facilities and portions of City Greenways. The City of Bowling Green has a wide variety of beautiful parks, trails and green spaces that provide recreational activities for the public and are well maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department. The Park Maintenance Division is very fortunate to have experienced employees with longevity with the City who are committed to quality and take great pride in their work.

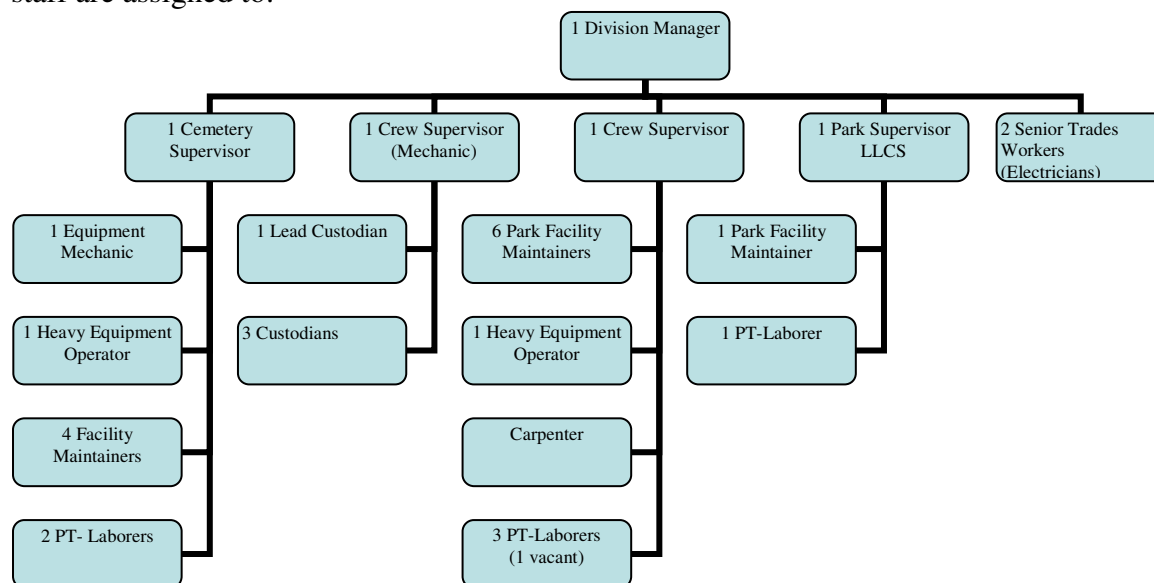
The division has created 5 program goals which include:

1. Plan, schedule and perform maintenance of most City park facilities.
2. Provide equipment and manpower for the daily operation of Parks Maintenance functions.
3. Coordinate and perform maintenance for the City's Greenways system.
4. Provide and manage a highly skilled work force to perform complex grounds and facilities operations.
5. Operate and maintain an active municipal cemetery.

The goals are supported by 7 program objectives identified by the division:

1. Perform duties and routines based on National Recreation and Parks Maintenance Standards.
2. Mow all maintained open spaces within a 5-7 workday timeframe.
3. Service and clean all major parks of litter and debris daily during peak seasonal usage.
4. Provide service and cleaning of all buildings, shelters, and restrooms on a daily basis during peak seasonal usage.
5. Inspect, repair, and maintain playground facilities on a weekly seasonal basis.
6. Maintain electrical infrastructure that insures 90% functionality of all lighting and related equipment.
7. Keep Kentucky Health Department ratings for pool facilities above a 96% compliance score annually.

The Parks Maintenance Division has several sub-divisions where the 26 full-time and 6 part time staff are assigned to:



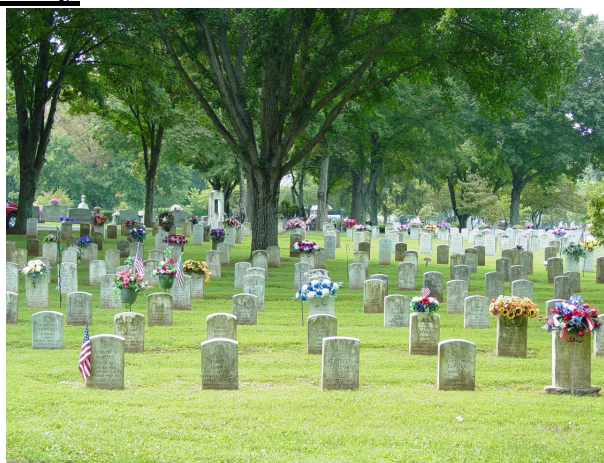
The Park Maintenance Division has two general sub-divisions: Cemetery and General Park Maintenance which includes custodial, mowing crews and construction/special events. Total operational cost between each park and cemetery cannot be accurately calculated because many costs are expensed out of general maintenance accounts or other park department budgets and cannot be traced to a specific park. However, calculations were performed to determine the labor cost per maintained acre based on actual employee labor costs including benefits. With the assistance of Public Works, the number of actual acres mowed and maintained by Park Maintenance was determined.

Once the total maintained acreage was calculated, a price per acre was determined for each available Park and for the overall cemetery acreage. Costs to specific parks were identified if staff members were directly assigned to that particular park. If the employee was not assigned to a specific park, the labor costs were added to the general park calculations including management, electricians and the carpenter. Forty percent (40%) of one electrician's cost is charged to the Russell Sims Aquatic Center Enterprise Fund while he is assigned to the waterpark during the swim season. The labor cost per acre from July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013 are as follows:

Sub-Division	Acres	Labor Cost	Cost Per Acre
Cemetery	109	\$441,115.44	\$4,046.93
Preston Miller	40.98	\$95,982.14	\$2,342.17
Lampkin Park	34.59	\$69,231.21	\$2,001.48
Lovers Lane	69.29	\$119,981.55	\$1,731.59
General Park	180.62	\$659,397.01	\$3,650.74
Custodial	n/a	\$192,285.04	n/a
	325.48	\$1,577,992.40	
Add Waterpark Electrician Cost		\$25,318.54	
Total Labor Cost		\$1,603,310.94	

The table above only calculates the total labor cost per maintained acre. Park Maintenance also maintains the Park's Department buildings, shelters and restrooms. The division performs general plumbing repairs, HVAC routine maintenance and minor repairs and general repairs at park facilities.

Cemetery



Employees assigned to the Cemetery sub-division only conduct work specific to City cemeteries such as mowing and maintaining the grounds, opening and closing of graves and related funeral work. Cemetery Maintenance also performs facility maintenance for the Cemetery Administration building, Cemetery Maintenance building and chapel. Cemetery staff maintains a total of 109 cemetery acres at the following locations:

1. Pioneer Cemetery - a closed cemetery that contains the remains of slaves as well as their owners. 103 unnamed soldiers are also buried in this cemetery from the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican War and the Civil War.
2. Mount Moriah - the oldest African American cemetery in Warren County. The City took over maintenance of the cemetery in 1984 due to complaints and neglect. No burial sites are sold from this cemetery; however, burials do occasionally occur when citizens have proof of burial rights.
3. Fairview Cemetery 1 - the original 30 acres purchased in 1864 which contains a Confederate Monument and the Bloch Memorial Chapel.
4. Fairview Cemetery 2 - by 1954 the original Fairview Cemetery was filling up and most of the lots were sold so additional land was purchased across the street which is referred to as Fairview Cemetery 2. This portion of the City's cemetery property contains a cremation scattering garden with urn niche walls and a Veterans Memorial Plaza.

In addition to the City owned cemeteries listed above, the City also entered into an agreement with the St. Joseph foundation in December 2011, to service all of the burials at the St. Joseph Cemetery located adjacent to City cemetery land. The agreement is for the City to open and close graves as well as provide tents and chairs if requested for all burials including cremation niche and mausoleum crypts for St. Joseph for an agreed upon price. Cemetery maintenance also removes all excess dirt from the cemetery, removes all gravesite burial flowers, refills the settled ground areas and lays sod once per year at no additional cost for the previous year's burials.

Custodial

Park Maintenance has a custodial sub-division which is responsible for all custodial work Monday through Friday at the Bowling Green Parks and Recreation Center, Kummer Little Recreation Center and Parker Bennett Recreation Center. They also clean the main Park Maintenance Shop and the Cemetery Administration building once a week, and will assist the Golf Course Division several times a year for detailed cleaning at the golf course facilities. The City contracts with an outside vendor to provide custodial services only to the Bowling Green Parks and Recreation Center on each weekend.

The general Park Maintenance staff is responsible for the custodial work at each of the City's Parks as well as trash pickup throughout the parks. There are 6 separate park restroom facilities where general Park Maintenance cleans 7 days a week from March through October, and an additional 4 park restroom facilities that are cleaned 365 days a year, assuming the park is not closed due to inclement weather. When special events occur at various parks, the park maintenance staff is responsible for multiple restroom cleanings and trash pickups throughout the event.

Cemetery maintenance staff is responsible for restroom cleaning at the cemetery maintenance shop and the Bloch Memorial Chapel.

Mowing/Grounds Maintenance

The largest routine task for Park Maintenance is the general mowing and maintenance of the park grounds. A rotating schedule includes two separate mowing crews that maintain the parks during mowing season which runs from March through October.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Other
Pedigo	HP Thomas	Covington Woods	Reservoir Hill	Weldon Pete Trails	Weldon Pete field once a month
Hobson Grove	Crossings	Roland Bland	Circus Square	Parker Bennett	Kereiakes rear field once a month
Church St. Trail	Ogden	Skate Park	Riverwalk	Kereiakes	Creekwood Trial bi-weekly
West Side	Creekwood Trail	Lee Square	Weldon Pete Trails	Police Firing Range	
	Hobson Grove Disc Golf	Shake Rag Lot			
	Service/Fuel	Boatlanding			
	Crume Nature	Kummer Little Ctr.			

The three largest City parks have specific maintenance staff that is dedicated to Lampkin Park, Preston Miller Park and Lovers Lane Soccer Complex. The grounds within the various parks require can be mowed relatively quickly and others require either a lot of weed-eating or more specific turf management. For example, Fort Webb does not require weekly mowing; however when mowing is required, the park requires a lot of weed-eating due to the layout and historical purpose of the park as shown below:



Lover's Lane Soccer Complex is mainly Bermuda grass so the maintenance staff must maintain the fields similar to a putting green of a golf course.

Special Events/Construction Projects

Park Maintenance Division has two electricians and one carpenter that have become instrumental in keeping costs for City construction projects down by being able to perform multiple construction related jobs either partially or fully in-house. Additional staff within Park Maintenance also has construction experience to help to construct and manage the projects at the City's parks. Some of the recent construction projects include:

New restroom facility at Lovers Lane Soccer Complex



Construction of additional storage area at Fleet Division



Reconstructed Dugouts and Score Boxes at Lampkin Park Fields #1 and #2



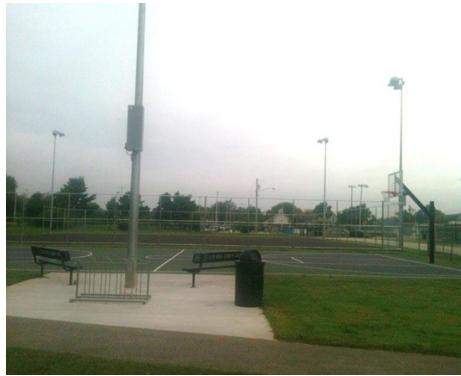
Renovation of BG Parks and Recreation Center's locker rooms and installation of new saunas



New Playground and shelter was built at Parker Bennett Community Center



New lighting system was installed at Kereiakes Park basketball and tennis courts



Multiple special events also occur annually at the City's parks which require Park Maintenance staff to work over the regular work schedule. There are several events each year at Circus Square such as the summer Concert in the Park series as well as the International Festival. These special events need electrical support from one of the Park Maintenance electricians to assist in setup as well as assist in any power failure. Additional staff is used at special events to perform custodial work throughout the event such as restroom cleaning and trash pickup and removal. Keriakes Park, Lampkin Park and Preston Miller Park also host special events that are supported by Park Maintenance staff.



Objective

The objective of this audit is to evaluate the adequacy of internal controls as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of operations related to: 1.) payroll; 2.) equipment, small tools and parts inventory management; 3.) work order and construction project management; 4.) general shop operations.

Scope

The scope of this audit included Park Maintenance operations from July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013.

Criteria and Approach

This audit was based on documented policies and procedures, as well as general best business practices. The approach consisted of three phases:

1. Understanding the Process:

During phase one, the entrance conference was held to discuss objectives of the audit work, collect information and documentation, and inform them why they were selected. Interviews were conducted with key management and administrative staff within the Department of Parks and Recreation and Department of Human Resources and Risk Management. Online research was conducted to review similar audits conducted on Parks and Recreation departments in other cities. I also spent time with each supervisor within Park Maintenance and gathered additional information about each role within the division. Finally, I conducted site visits to each of the City's parks.

2. Sample Determination and Detailed Testing:

During phase two, eleven (11) risk areas were identified and prioritized based on perceived control techniques, control weaknesses and the impact and probability of occurring within the payroll process. Reviews and testing was conducted on expenditure records, payroll data, and multiple site visits were conducted in evaluating assets, small tools and equipment, as well as inventory items of the division.

3. Reporting:

During phase three, I analyzed and evaluated the results of the tests performed. I then summarized the observations and recommendations into a report format based on the analysis. An exit conference was conducted with management and their responses were incorporated into this report.

Statement of Standards

The audit was performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards required that I plan and perform the audit to afford a reasonable basis for judgments and conclusions regarding the organization, program, activity or function under audit. An audit also includes assessments of applicable internal controls, compliance requirements under the law and regulations when necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. I believe this audit provides a reasonable basis for the conclusions.

Audit Conclusion

Based on the results of this audit, the City of Bowling Green's Parks are beautifully maintained parks. However, several opportunities exist for Park Maintenance Management to improve its processes and become more accountable.

Observations and Recommendations

- 1. Weekly Work Reports should be consistently completed if the reports are what management plans to rely on for analysis and evaluations of efficiencies within the division. No management reporting or analysis is performed from the reports to identify inefficiencies or problem areas within the division.**

Observation

Weekly Work Reports should be completed by each employee on a weekly basis to document the time used to perform each task within a given week. Weekly Work Reports were implemented by the Park Maintenance Division in January 2013 for management to analyze work trends, assist in annual ICMA reporting, and improve efficiencies within the department. The Weekly Work Reports are submitted to a volunteer part-time office worker at the main Parks Maintenance Shop for entry into a spreadsheet.

The Weekly Work Reports are inconsistently completed among staff and are not required or followed up on by divisional management to enforce their completion. There is no reporting system created to analyze the information contained on the reports and respective spreadsheet in order for management to track trends or issues that arise. A sample of a Weekly Work Report is shown below:

PARKS DEPARTMENT ~ WEEKLY WORK REPORT

SUNDAY

TASK	SITE	# HOURS
150	RVR	.25
170	RVR	.25
150	RB	.50
170	RBRBSK	.50
170	BGCC	.50
	KLC hse	
		2.0

MONDAY

TASK	SITE	# HOURS
150	RVR	.25
170	RVR	.25
150	RB	.50
170	RBRBSK	.50
501	LLSC	6.50
		8.0

TUESDAY

TASK	SITE	# HOURS
150	RVR	.25
170	RVR	.25
150	RB	.50
170	RBRBSK	.50
461	CIR	3.0
701	RB	1.0
	RVR	1.0
Hazard	PD	1.50
Commercial		
Training		
		8.0

WEDNESDAY

TASK	SITE	# HOURS
150	RVR	.25
170	RVR	.25
150	RB	.50
170	RBRBSK	1.0
Chair	BTL VP	2.0
Boat		
Roof		
Jogging Trail	KP	4.0
		8.0

THURSDAY

TASK	SITE	# HOURS
150	RVR	.25
170	RVR	.25
150	RB	.50
170	RBRBSK	1.0
Setting	Bowling	1.0
Tent	Green	
	High	
Mowing	RB	
Blossoms	Brass	5.0
	Gicks	
	Club	
		8.0

FRIDAY

TASK	SITE	# HOURS
150	RVR	.25
170	RVR	.25
150	RB	.50
170	RBRBSK	.50
Eating	Bowling	1.0
Dish	Green	
Tent	High	
530	KP	5.50
		8.0

SATURDAY

TASK	SITE	# HOURS
150	RVR	.50
170	RVR	.25
150	RB	1.0
170	RBRBSK	1.50
170	BGCC	.25
	hse KLC	
		2.50

Directions: Use the task and site codes on the back of this form to track your daily tasks. Indicate the number of hours that it took you to complete each task. Use .5 hour increments.

This form is to be completed daily and must be turned in weekly to your supervisor. The hours indicated on this form should coincide with your timesheet.

#268222

The reports are listed by date to identify the task, park facility (site) and length of time taken to complete the task. There are 138 tasks and 78 site codes listed for the staff to utilize on this report which can be overwhelming at times for the staff to identify the correct task to go with the correct site. The Division has no process in place other than the Weekly Work Reports to determine how often maintenance is performed at each park to ensure adequate coverage of all locations.

Risk

Without a consistent method to report workloads and tasks being utilized within the division, management cannot fully analyze the effectiveness and efficiencies of the division.

Recommendation

Management should enforce the completion of the Weekly Work Reports and make the task listing as simple as possible if the reports are to be relied upon to capture workloads and cost drivers. The reports must be completed and timely keyed into a reliable spreadsheet or system so management can create a standardized and consistent method to review the information for timely decision making.

Management should also consider adding an office support staff member either on a part-time or full-time basis that can be dedicated to the division in order to timely and accurately handle the administrative and reporting functions of the division. The current method of relying on a volunteer part-time person to handle the majority of the administrative functions required in a division of this size is not adequate support the needs of the division.

Management Response

Bowling Green Parks and Recreation (BGPR) recognizes the need for a quality weekly work reporting and work order system and plans to approach the addition of such software through the FY15 budget process. Hopes are such computer software will track: work request, work order processing, and work order approvals and scheduling. With that said, the current system was developed by Parks Maintenance staff as an introduction towards such a process. We recognize the need for a Parks Maintenance Management Computer Software System and look forward towards that implementation.

The recommendation towards office support staff would be welcomed. This position will be introduced during the FY15 budget process as we look forward to the immediate impact such a position will have on the BGPR Maintenance Division.

- 2. Park Maintenance management should implement a robust work order system to provide effective tracking and reporting of maintenance costs of equipment as well as maintenance costs relative to park locations.**

Observation

The Division does not have a process in place to accurately determine the cost of maintenance at each park location since the parts, materials, equipment, etc. used to complete projects or work orders are not consistently charged to the specific park location. The majority of the expenditures are lumped into either the general maintenance budget or the Athletic Division budget in some construction projects, instead of tracking costs specific to each location, project or work order. Parks Administration staff does key a park location in the description of the purchase in the accounts payable system; however, Park Maintenance does not have the ability to effectively analyze and manage operational costs pertaining to each park.

The current work order system is a paper based system which is occasionally utilized by Park Departmental staff when repair issues arise or when Park Maintenance staff document a needed repair based on the monthly inspections. Work orders are not created for preventative maintenance on equipment or other maintenance areas so it is difficult to ensure preventative maintenance or repair work is being completed.

The vehicles assigned to the Park Maintenance Division as well as some of the large equipment is maintained by the Public Work's Fleet Division which utilizes Fleet Focus software to track preventative maintenance and repairs to each asset. Park Maintenance is responsible for preventative maintenance and repairs to the rest of their equipment; however, all maintenance records are kept manually by whichever maintenance staff performs the maintenance on the specific piece of equipment. This prevents management from monitoring effectively that all preventative maintenance is done on time and hinders their ability to forecast future maintenance and replacement costs for the assets maintained by the Park Maintenance Division.

According to the National Recreation and Park Association, "the application and use of technology should enable the agency to operate efficiently." The National Recreation and Park Association publishes National Accreditation Standards which provide an accepted best practice to strive for. In the Application of Technology standard, it discussed how an agency "should be researching and applying" resources that included "work orders and assignment applications" among other uses of technology.

Risk

Without a robust work order system in place, Park Maintenance is limited in their ability to evaluate costs of maintenance for each park location or equipment maintained by the division so they cannot accurately report on overall shop performance and effectiveness.

Recommendation

An automated work order system should be implemented to help Park Maintenance automate the recording of maintenance requests as well as recurring, periodic scheduled maintenance. There are many benefits to a robust work order system that could enable management to:

- Schedule work for staff
- Create monthly schedules for preventative maintenance
- Assign individual work orders to staff
- Track the completion of each work order
- Track the costs of labor and materials for each work order
- Generate reports to analyze the frequency and cost of maintenance at each park location
- Forecast future maintenance and replacement costs for assets

The City has more than one work order system that is already in use at other divisions within the City. Park Administration and Park Maintenance should research the capabilities within the City and implement the one which they feel will best meet the needs of the department. I have already met with members of Public Works as well as our Information Technology Department and I feel confident that either the Fleet Focus or Logos work order system would adequately meet the department's needs.

Management Response

BGPR recognizes and is excited about the significant impact the implementation of a Parks Maintenance Management Computer Software System would present. All options for such software will be examined for implementation during future budget planning.

Several site visits and interviews were performed with Park Maintenance staff to obtain a general understanding of the weekend work flows of the division.

1. The full-time employee assigned to Preston Miller Park consistently works 7 days a week and is the only employee, with rare exception, to perform weekend work at this location. The work consists of opening the restroom doors, cleaning the restrooms and shelters and emptying of all trash from the park including trash cans and any trash on the grounds.
2. The Heavy Equipment Operator consistently works 7 days a week and is the only employee, with rare exception, to perform weekend work at RiverWalk/McConnell Park, Roland Bland Park and the Skate Park which includes opening and cleaning the restrooms at those facilities, emptying all trash from the parks including trash cans, and any trash on the grounds. The justification by Park Maintenance management for the Heavy Equipment Operator performing this weekend work is due to occasional washout of the trail at Kerieakes Park when it rains. This employee is also the leader in any snow removal efforts.
3. Cemetery Maintenance staff utilizes a rotating schedule for Saturday work which includes any scheduled funerals or opening of the cemetery gates if no funerals are scheduled on any given Saturday. They also rotate the Sunday two hour minimum overtime shift for opening the gates at the cemeteries year round. Funerals are not performed on Sundays in the City cemeteries.
4. Lovers Lane Soccer Complex (LLSC) staff will have occasional weekend work, but it is only to support large events/tournaments at the park. The staff will help set up the fields for the event and handle any problems that occur, but Park Athletics staff is responsible for cleaning the restrooms and keeping the trash picked up at the park on event days. Staff at LLSC was the only Park Maintenance staff that indicated the use of flex time within a work week from time to time.
5. East Side Parks (Covington Woods, Kerieakes, Fountain Square, Reservoir Hill, HP Thomas and LLSC) are opened and cleaned on the weekends by general Park Maintenance employees on a sign-up basis.
6. West Side Parks (Lampkin, Parker Bennett, Pedigo, Hobson Grove and Boatlanding) are opened and cleaned on the weekends by general Park Maintenance employees on a sign-up basis.
7. Circus Square restroom opening/cleaning, trash pickup as well as water checks at the fountain are performed by the Crew Supervisor and Maintenance Division Manager. Specific pool related certification and skills are required for the fountains at Circus Square and the only employees with this training are one Crew Supervisor, the Maintenance Division Manager and one Senior Trades Worker who is responsible for maintenance duties and water checks at Russell Sims Aquatic Center during the summer months.

The City also has a custodial contract for the weekend cleaning at the Bowling Green Parks and Recreation Center, but it is only for that one facility. The remaining custodial duties are handled by the Park Maintenance Division.

Risk

Skilled labor employees with higher wage rates can easily increase the cost of general custodial work if it is not monitored.

Recommendation

Overtime and workload cost drivers should be thoroughly analyzed and employees should be adequately cross trained to assist one another especially on the routine weekend work. Weekend work should be based on what is the most effective use of employee time verses a segregated system based on employee preferences.

Park Management should consider installing additional electronic door mechanisms throughout the City parks so the unlocking and locking of park restrooms can be programmed in and employee time can be used for other tasks.

Management should review the process and determine if it is in the City's best interest to:

1. Maintain/improve the current system of utilizing full-time staff to perform the custodial weekend work;
2. Hire additional part-time seasonal positions to work March through October at the division's busiest time; or
3. Expand the current outsourced custodial contract to perform the custodial weekend work.

Management Response

BGPR Maintenance has taken strides towards minimizing these cost drivers towards, predominately, weekend overtime. Three potential cost savings that will continue to be explored and introduced more are:

- 1- Flex scheduling of employees on larger scale. This practice was rarely used prior to 2013 and will be more prevalent as management expectations are better defined.
- 2- Shared duties among greater number of employees. Duties that have been traditionally performed by a limited amount of employees will be shared by Golf, Cemetery, Athletics, and Landscape Divisions.
- 3- A greater reliance on part-time labor. By simply using part-time labor during increased overtime periods, overtime expenditures will be drastically reduced. Current part-time employees will have a greater role for general maintenance responsibilities. Future maintenance staff additions will concentrate on increased part-time labor that is specifically earmarked for these general maintenance responsibilities.

- 4. Monthly inspections should be completed as required by the City of Bowling Green's Risk Management Manual and documented on related inspection forms created by Risk Management.**

Observation

Park Maintenance is responsible for two main types of monthly inspections according to City Policy:

1. Monthly playground inspections are required in order to ensure the safety of the playground equipment owned by the City of Bowling Green. Playground inspections are required by City Policy as well as national best practices to be completed at a minimum on a monthly basis. The City Risk Management Manual also recommends weekly inspections during the months of March through September.
2. Monthly general park inspections are required in order to ensure the overall safety of the City's parks. Monthly Park Inspection forms have been created by the City's Safety and Risk Manager.

A review of the monthly playground inspections as well as the monthly general park inspection reports was conducted as part of the audit testing. The playground inspections were generally completed, but not all inspection forms were initially filed within the appropriate binders so Park Maintenance management located them and produced them for Internal Audit. The monthly general park inspections were not completed consistently among all parks.

One set of playground equipment located at St. Joseph Catholic School was missing five monthly inspections over the past fiscal year. The City of Bowling Green entered into an agreement with St. Joseph Catholic School in 1995 and amended the agreement in 2006 as part of the Chapter 99 Redevelopment Plan for the area. The agreement states that the City would purchase playground equipment for use on the St. Joseph School grounds. The playground equipment was to remain property of the City; however St. Joseph's events and programs would have first priority in the use of the playground. The playground was to be made available for public use by the City's Parks and Recreation Department when not in use by St. Joseph School. The City's Park Maintenance Division has worked with St. Joseph since that date to maintain the playground at St. Joseph such as taking turns paying for the playground mulch bed each year. The City pays for all repairs to City owned playground equipment according to Park Maintenance management.

The City's Safety and Risk Manager created a new general monthly park inspection form for each of the City Parks in February 2013. The inspection forms were specific to each park and were to be checked off each month in order to document that monthly inspections were being performed. Upon review of the binders, most of the parks were missing appropriate documentation on the inspection forms for the monthly inspections. The inspections should have begun on the new forms in March 2013 and upon review in September 2013, several of the parks were missing monthly inspections:

<u>Park</u>	<u>Months Completed</u>
Fort Webb	Binder not found
Lampkin	April-May 2013
Lee Square	March-July 2013
Parker Bennett	March-April 2013
Pedigo Park	March-April 2013
Riverwalk	March-April 2013
Roland Bland	March-April 2013
Skate Park	March-April 2013
Westside	March-April 2013

Risk

The City is at increased risk of accidents and potential legal action if monthly inspections are not performed and appropriately documented as required by City Policy and best practices.

Recommendation

Park Administration should review the agreement with St. Joseph Catholic School and determine if the City is the responsible party for conducting the monthly playground inspections at the facility. If it is determined that the City is responsible, then Park Maintenance management should ensure that the monthly playground inspections are conducted the same as any other City park.

The general monthly inspections should be required to be performed per City Policy. Park Maintenance Management should periodically review and ensure that all inspections are being completed as required as well as appropriately documented and filed in the applicable binders for review if needed.

Management Response

BGPR Maintenance Division will abide by all City of Bowling Green Safety Requirements. BGPR Maintenance Division will become more vigilant in meeting this recommendation. Observations mentioned towards this recommendation are indicative of the need for office support staff. Parks Maintenance inspects 25+ facilities and 14 playgrounds so the need for better documentation of all inspections will be met.

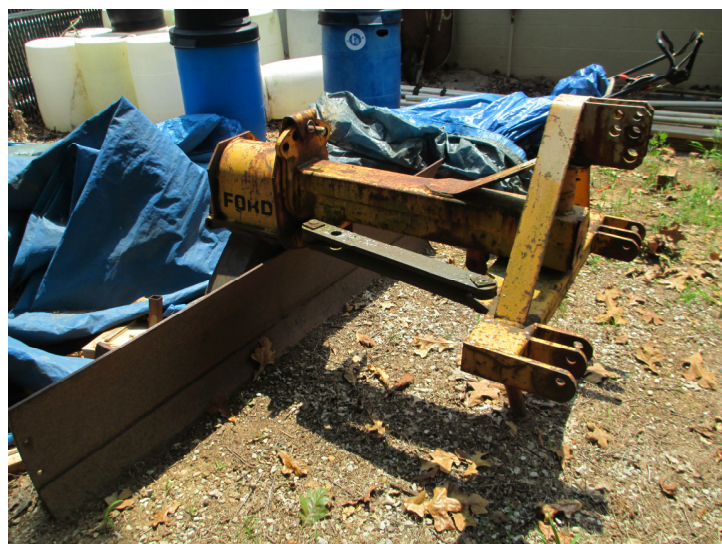
- 5. Park Maintenance needs to develop a method that will track transfer of assets to different locations or City divisions. In addition, any unused and broken, sold or traded in assets should be appropriately documented and surplus.**

Observation

City departments are very fortunate to have adequate and good working equipment to perform their work. As part of the audit, I spent several hours verifying that the assets listed in the City's financial software could be found and identified. Most of the assets were found through the site visits performed. However, some assets were difficult to find due to the fact that there was no method to track the transfer of assets from the various locations within the City's park system. For example, a Hustler 6400 Hillsider was purchased on May 9, 2000 for \$24,998.00. According to the City's asset listing, the Hillsider was located at the Parks Maintenance building, but on my first site visit the staff thought that it had been transferred to Public Work's Operations Division. Upon further inquiry, Park Maintenance Management said that it had been transferred to the Golf Division and was located at Crosswinds Maintenance shop. The Hillsider was found at Crosswind's Maintenance shop, but during conversations with staff at Crosswinds I was told that they ended up with it because it was never really used by Park Maintenance. The Hillsider is now 13 years old and only has 256 hours of usage on it as of October 29, 2013.

Another example of transferred assets was a Cushman Truckster purchased on September 27, 2001 for \$13,285.00. According to the City asset listing, the location of the truckster was at Parks Maintenance shop; however the description said it was at the Cemetery Maintenance shop. During the site visits, there was confusion among staff as to where the truckster was, but it was eventually found at the Landscape Division building.

During the many site visits, it was also determined that there were several pieces of equipment that were not used or broken which needed to be properly surplus through the City's Purchasing Agent and follow established surplus process. Below is a photo of some unused and broken equipment behind the maintenance shop at Lampkin Park.



Lastly, there were three assets which Maintenance Staff stated were either sold at City auction or traded-in on new equipment; however, I was unable to find any surplus forms or documentation to show where the asset items were sold or traded-in. The assets below are still listed on the City's asset listing, but according to staff are no longer City owned assets:

Asset No.	Description	Capitalized Date	Price
16414	Triking Tractor	10/1/1995	\$18,075.00
14278	JD Prog 15.5 Tri Deck Mower s/n 9965724	6/4/1999	\$8,495.00
14778	Dixie Chopper Mower XW4000 s/n 10-28869	6/5/2000	\$10,269.00

Risk

Without a system that will allow tracking of location transfers of assets; a standardized procedure enforced to document the surplus of broken equipment; or a standardized procedure enforced to remove assets that are sold or traded; risks increase for City assets to be lost or stolen.

Recommendation

Park management should identify and document the disposition of the three assets identified above and complete appropriate forms so the Department of Finance can remove from the City's asset listing.

Park Maintenance should consider working with Public Works Fleet Focus software to add all assets into a system to manage the transfers and general maintenance of the assets. This would allow locations to be established so assets could be tracked when transferred to various locations within the City.

Park Maintenance should work with the City's Purchasing Agent to train applicable staff on the correct way to document and obtain approvals to surplus assets that are to be sold, traded or scrapped. The Purchasing Agent would be responsible for working with the Finance Department to ensure sold or traded assets were removed from the City's asset listing.

A review should be conducted by management to determine the applicable need and usage of existing City assets. Old, unused assets should be sold or advertised to other City departments to see if the asset could be utilized by a different division or department if not being utilized as originally intended by Park Maintenance.

Management Response

BGPR will examine the use of Public Works Fleet Focus software to assist with the management of assets. With an eye towards the future, BGPR hopes that shared equipment within our department and other City of Bowling Green Departments becomes a regular practice so the need for asset tracking is acknowledged as an increasingly important management responsibility.

6. **Small tools, equipment and inventory need a divisional approval process and division wide coordination for purchases. An inventory system should be implemented to assist management in creating an accountable system for parts and inventory.**

Observation

Small tools and equipment were inventoried in January 2013 by Park Maintenance staff in preparation of the audit process. Many of the small tools and equipment had not been tagged prior to this time so it was a good move forward to go through the process of adding tags to the many items at the various maintenance locations. There are separate maintenance shops located at Fairview Cemetery, Lovers Lane Soccer Complex, Lampkin Park, Preston Miller Park and the main Park Maintenance facility.

Small tools, equipment and parts inventory is purchased by staff at each location and most maintenance employees have purchasing authority to purchase these items independently as needed. A purchase order must be obtained from Parks Administration for each purchase; however, as long as the purchase is under \$2,500 maintenance staff members are given a PO provided that there is enough money in the budget to cover the expenditure without any documented approval by Park Maintenance Management. Park Administration staff will ask for a vehicle, location, or project that the small tool or equipment will be utilized for and will issue a red Parks and Recreation Department asset tag number if applicable.

The Maintenance Division does employ a Crew Supervisor who is also the division's mechanic; however, he does not have the duty or authority to coordinate the purchases for the division which can lead to unnecessary purchases. An example of such purchase is shown in the picture below. It is a backpack leaf blower that was purchased in June of 2012 for approximately \$400. As of September 2013 it has never been used and is still in the original box at the Maintenance Shop.



There is also a fragmented inventory of parts throughout each Maintenance Shop. Each shop maintains their own varying supply of parts and inventory for small repairs and preventative maintenance. However, there is no system that tracks any of the small parts and inventory so there is no way to validate or reconcile the parts and inventory. The fragmented purchasing process can easily lead to the purchase of items that are never used. Below are a couple of photos from shelves in the Parks Maintenance Shop. The photo to the left contains an entire shelf of filters that have never been used. It is not in the supply room where the mechanic maintains his supply of parts and inventory. There are also a number of old chainsaws, weed-eaters, and leaf blowers that are kept for use as parts as shown in the photo on the right, but they are not identified as parts in any method to ensure staff knows what parts are available for repairs. Recyclable items such as the copper coil also shown in the lower right photo are not consistently secured or stored.



The Park Maintenance Crew Supervisor, who is the division's mechanic, has his own supply room at the Park Maintenance shop to keep spare parts, tires and inventory for repairing the division's equipment. A photo of this room is below. Without an actual inventory system, there was no way to verify the inventory maintained at the location. There is also secondary supply room which contains the electrician's parts and inventory; however, there is no system to track parts and inventory in that area either.



Risk

Without appropriate divisional oversight of purchasing and accountable tracking of small tools, equipment and part inventory, the City increases its potential for fraud, waste or abuse.

Recommendation

Parks Maintenance should evaluate their small tools, equipment and inventory practices. A system with proper segregation of duties should be created by having one designated staff person such as the division mechanic or some other appropriate supervisor to approve and coordinate purchases, and track small tools, equipment and inventory, rather than the current practice of all staff members independently purchasing and maintaining their own small tools, equipment and parts inventory.

This staff member would need the support of an accountable inventory system (possibly a bar code system) so inventory and parts could be known and available for use in repairs. Periodic checks should be made by management to ensure the accuracy of such inventory system once established.

A periodic review of the inventory system once established would need to occur to prevent the collection of filters and other parts for items that are outdated or no longer owned by the City.

Any recyclable material should be secured for future use or taken to a recycling center in an appropriate manner where a check is sent to the City for the recycled items.

These recommendations should be reviewed and implemented throughout the Department.

Management Response:

BGPR Maintenance Division will develop an established protocol for the coordination of purchases. In addition, required monthly inventory checks will be implemented for all parts and supplies within this division immediately.

7. The Park Maintenance Division should study the use of staff time during winter months and evaluate how the staff can be best utilized.

Observation

The routine tasks within the Parks and Recreation Department including Park Maintenance are greatly impacted by seasonal weather patterns. For example, in the winter months, mowing is not required like the warmer months from generally March through October. The slow seasonal months do have some winter construction and general maintenance projects; however management evaluation of staff use for this purpose has not been conducted to ensure efficient use of all staff time.

Risk

A lack of accountability and effective controls over labor costs in the winter months can significantly affect the overall costs of the division and lessen the efficiency of the employees' time at work.

Recommendation

Analyze the cost effectiveness of winter projects and use of full-time staff in the winter months for all Maintenance staff including Cemetery Maintenance. Consider the use of Park Maintenance staff to assist in other Citywide work during these slower winter months. For example, the winter months increases the work load in Public Works for leaf pickup and snow removal. This is just one example of additional tasks that some Park Maintenance staff could be trained to assist with during the slower season of the year. The winter months are also a great time to provide continuing education or departmental cross training within the department to increase coverage and the staff's ability to assist one another.

These recommendations should be reviewed and implemented throughout the Department where appropriate.

Management Response

BGPR Maintenance Division acknowledges that winter months provide greater challenge for efficient/effective time usage. For this reason, BGPR Maintenance takes great pride in that many recommendations mentioned within this section are followed. As evidence, from this is a recent time-line of finished projects:

- 1) Pioneer Cemetery Bloch Chapel – BGPR Maintenance staff made repairs to existing roof. Cost \$10,000 for repairs. Started in November, 2012 and completed in January, 2013.
- 2) R. Sims Aquatic Center Storage Building. BGPR Maintenance staff constructed a 950 square foot storage building. This building now houses all pool chemicals and resolves a recurring problem of Lack of Storage Space as sighted yearly through the City of Bowling Green Safety and Risk Manager. Cost \$55,622 to build. Started in September, 2011 and completed in June, 2012.
- 3) Security Gate & Fencing at Lover's Lane Soccer Complex, Crosswinds Maintenance Shop, Lampkin Park Maintenance Shop, Preston Miller Maintenance Shop and Landscape Office – BGPR Maintenance staff led work

projects to update the entry gate and adjacent fencing for a more security and improve employee safety and security per the City of Bowling Green Safety and Risk Manager. Cost \$20,706 to make improvements. Started in September, 2011 and completed in March, 2012.

- 4) BGPR Fitness Locker Rooms – BGPR Maintenance staff dismantled previous Men's and Women's Fitness Locker Rooms and then reconstructed major renovations. Cost \$95,624 to build. Started in November, 2012 and completed in April, 2013.
- 5) Lampkin Park Field #1 and Field #2 Phase I and II. Work included concrete entry, fence repairs, backstop reconstruction, dugouts renovations, scoreboard renovations, and storage room construction. Cost \$125,850 to build. Started in January, 2012 and completed in June, 2013.

To further illustrate BGPR Maintenance Division's commitment to winter hour justification, the division has worked along Public Works as part of the Leaf Crew since 2010. During this time, the division has scheduled TWO Maintenance Division employees to work on this crew from the beginning of October to end of December each year. BGPR Maintenance Division has enjoyed this cooperative work arrangement and welcomes future co-staffing opportunities.

BGPR hopes that better documentation of such winter projects will be an addition feature of an enhanced work order system created through the commitment to a Parks Maintenance Management Computer Software System.

- 8. The Park Maintenance Division should develop a written Policy and Procedure Manual to standardize and document the multiple responsibilities of this division, as well as to move closer to the departmental wide goal of obtaining accreditation by a national park association.**

Observation

The Park Maintenance Division has such a wide variety of responsibilities including but not limited to: mowing, playground equipment maintenance, general ground maintenance, custodial duties such as restroom cleaning and trash pickup, electrical work, carpentry, plumbing, HVAC, construction and special event assistance. However, the majority of their tasks and acceptable standards are based on employee experience and knowledge without any official written standards or procedures.

In reviewing the National Recreation and Park Association (NPRA) standards for accreditation, there were some identified areas where Park Maintenance can improve and increase their ability to reach the departmental goal of becoming accredited. By properly documenting policy and procedures which are already in use, as well as creating additional procedures as necessary, the division can manage the complex operations in a consistent and effective manner. According to the NPRA Accreditation Standards:

-There shall be an established maintenance and operations plan for management of the agency's park and recreation areas, facilities and equipment.

Each of these areas shall be assigned an appropriate set of maintenance standards including both recommended frequency and acceptable quality.

-The agency should have procedures for the assignment of competent personnel with clearly defined duties for routine maintenance, repairs and minor improvements, general cleanliness and overall attractiveness of areas, facilities and equipment.

Supervisory staff must be able to focus on maintenance management, such as workload control, as well as supervise the technical details of maintenance work.

During the audit process, the Maintenance Division Manager created several documents to identify work schedules for the division. With his impending retirement at the end of October 2013, he also was drafting a manual for use by staff after his retirement. However, so much of the knowledge base is employee experience driven and busy that most, if not all, of the supervisory staff doesn't have or take the time to focus on the maintenance management issues, such as workload control and supervision of the detail maintenance work as recommended in the above standards.

Risk

Without written policy and procedures, any division or department increases their risk of inconsistency, inefficiency, error or incomplete duties.

Recommendation

Create a detailed Policy and Procedures Manual for the Maintenance Division that documents standards, procedures and expectations for the various tasks within the division. Any photos of City facilities that could be used to demonstrate acceptable verses unacceptable would assist all staff in keeping the parks maintained in an appropriate manner. Photos that were taken during

the audit process below are examples of how the division can illustrate acceptable verses unacceptable standards of maintenance:



Unacceptable: Two Restroom doors at Roland Bland Park

Acceptable photo on right: Restroom door at Preston Miller Park



Acceptable: Basketball Court at PBCC Unacceptable: Volleyball Court at Lampkin Park

A written policy and procedures manual can assist in varying areas within the City as a whole. Please refer to a well written excerpt from the *Handbook for General Law Village Officials*, published by the Michigan Municipal League located in Attachment A. This excerpt does a great job of explaining why policies and procedures should be written and identifies multiple purposes that a policy manual can serve. During this process, special attention should be given to the role of supervisors and their ability to focus on management of the division vs. the routine tasks at hand.

Even though this specific audit pertains to the Park Maintenance Audit, I would also recommend that the Parks Department as a whole evaluates their use of or need for written policies within other divisions. These recommendations should be reviewed and implemented throughout the Department.

Management Response

BGPR Maintenance Division will revise current Policy and Procedure Manual towards this recommendation. BGPR's long-range goal of attaining accreditation would be significantly impacted by this recommendation. Steps towards this end will be implemented in near future.

Attachment A

Section 3: Village Operations

Chapter 13: The importance of written policies and procedures

Why you should put policies and procedures in writing

If your municipality is small or if it operates under a relatively close-knit management group, policies may be “understood.” This means that while you may not have written policies, managers and supervisors have a good idea of the municipality’s expectations regarding certain basic issues pertaining to employees.

Relying on “understood” policies, however, may lead to misunderstandings. For example, the department of public works (DPW) manager calls a meeting and launches into a tirade about the number of employees he sees not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). One supervisor may interpret it as a decided shift in the organization’s policy toward this requirement. She responds with a sudden crackdown on lapses in following PPE requirements in her area, disciplining every employee who fails to wear PPE when appropriate. Another supervisor, present at the same meeting, does not take the manager’s tirade as seriously. He knows that some lapses will occur. Besides, he is certain that the manager was not directing his comments at *his* area. He knows there are other areas within the DPW and other departments that are far less strict about PPE than he is. So he decides to sit tight for a while and wait for this “storm” to blow over before he does anything drastic.

Just imagine the kind of resentment and frustration a situation like this might create. What if two employees from the department share rides to work and begin to compare notes on how their supervisors reacted to the manager’s tirade? The individual whose supervisor disciplined him will have every

reason to feel angry and put upon. On an organization-wide basis, this can mean lower morale and productivity, more grievances and understandably poor relations between supervisors and employees. In addition, neither supervisor has done anything that will consistently improve employee compliance with the requirement to wear PPE.

Managers and supervisors who have worked for the same municipality for a number of years may *think* they understand its policies. Usually all they really have is a sense of how their peers and predecessors have handled similar situations in the past.

Other managers go on instinct, dealing with each situation as it arises and relying on their own “good” judgment to make the right decisions. Either approach will almost certainly result in inconsistencies.

These inconsistencies can, in turn, result in misunderstandings, grievances and even lawsuits. There have been many instances where managers and supervisors have taken a single manager’s decision – with no written policy to back it – as “policy setting.” The decision has then influenced many similar decisions by other managers and supervisors throughout the organization.

If the original decision was sound, this may not result in any immediate disastrous consequences. What happens, however, if that manager acted illogically, irrationally or even illegally?

Managers and supervisors who think they are in accordance with “municipal” policy may repeat the original error in judgment many times.

These kinds of situations illustrate why a policy manual is absolutely essential in today’s complex, competitive and

regulation-ridden work environment. Employers cannot expect their managers or supervisors to keep up with the many forces that continually shape a municipality's policy.

Among these forces are the latest changes in the law, changes in the character of the work force and its expectations and changes in operations. There should be a single, current, authoritative source of guidance and information that they can use when making decisions or enforcing policy. This will reduce the tendency to act on memory or instinct.

With a policy manual, managers and supervisors will be able to act decisively, fairly, legally and consistently. Employees will also know that their managers or supervisors are acting in accordance with municipal policy as well as applicable federal and state regulations.

Of course, a policy manual may not answer all your problems. Your supervisors must know what your policies regarding employee safety and health are and understand the reasons behind them. Without this understanding, you cannot expect them to carry the policies out with the commitment that is so vital to their effectiveness.

Take your right-to-know program as an example.

Let's say a supervisor must hire a large number of summer workers and get them in the field quickly. The supervisor knows it is your policy to provide all new hires in that department with right-to-know training as the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act requires.

However, the supervisor has projects that need immediate attention and would like to ignore the requirement, especially since the employees are short-term.

If supervisors do not understand how failure to comply with MIOSHA might result in injury to employees and/or fines to the municipality, they may not cooperate with your efforts to provide employees with a safe and healthful workplace.

Good written policies do more than help supervisors and managers make difficult

decisions and enforce rules. They provide the framework and background for such decisions, so that supervisors can explain to their subordinates (and to themselves) why a certain action or decision is the right one under the circumstances. Some policy manuals give a brief introduction to each policy, stating the reason a policy is necessary in this area, and what the organization hopes to achieve through implementation of the policy. Such information is invaluable when it comes to explaining an unpopular decision to employees, or when a supervisor must decide a course of action that runs contrary to his or her instincts.

How are policies made?

Most policies are a natural outgrowth of the decision-making process. A manager who faces a situation or problem for the first time evaluates it and makes a decision or issues an order that he or she feels is appropriate.

While this decision may not present an immediate problem, it could lead to complications later. Let's say that a similar situation arises later, but under slightly or quite different circumstances. The manager who must make the decision this time around has to revise the original to fit these changed circumstances.

After a period of time, you have many supervisors and managers making totally different decisions in the same area while believing that they are adhering to "organization policy."

Most policies develop from past practices – good or bad, fair or unfair.

Even in organizations where a policy manual exists, these past practices can continue to influence managerial decisions. In other words, managers cannot ignore them.

The best policy is one that arises from the best decisions of the past. It should incorporate the careful thought, the good judgment and the valuable experience of all managers who have faced problems or decisions in a particular policy area. This process should eliminate the irrational,

illogical and unfair decisions that have contributed to inconsistent application of the organization's policy.

Most important of all, a good policy is a natural outgrowth of the organization's management philosophy and overall objectives. It helps management direct the organization according to its established goals and mission.

More specifically, policy development occurs when a group of people – a policy committee – meets and reaches consensus on specific policy statements. Committee members review past practices and the traditional approaches to certain situations as well as the latest legal requirements and management techniques. They try to pool their ideas and experiences, iron out differences of opinion and come up with policies that are both fair and workable. Ideally, representatives come from the employee, supervisory and management ranks. This helps to assure that the committee considers the interests of all three groups during policy formulation. Policy development should also include a procedure for enforcing, reviewing and updating the policies.

What purposes does a policy manual serve?

A well written, up-to-date policy manual guides managers and supervisors in making decisions, training and handling employment issues that relate to safety and health. A policy manual also offers other less obvious benefits. Consider the following:

- **A policy manual serves as a basic communications tool.** The very process of compiling a policy manual includes a survey of managers', supervisors' and employees' views on each subject or policy area.

This process provides top management with an opportunity to find out where their staff stands and how they feel about certain issues. Top management can also learn what steps the management staff would like to see the organization take, what areas are giving them problems, and where confusion and misunderstandings lie. In other words, the policy formulation process is perhaps the best opportunity that an organization's top managers will have to communicate with its management team on subjects of mutual interest. In return, supervisors and managers get a chance to find out exactly where top management stands on these issues.

The important thing to remember about policy manuals, however, is that communication should not stop once the committee completes the manual. On the contrary, this should be where the real communication – between supervisors and employees as well as between supervisors and their superiors – begins. Every single time a question concerning a policy arises, the supervisor or manager in charge has an opportunity to improve communication and understanding with the employee(s) involved.

- **A policy manual is an excellent training resource.** You can use the manual both in training newly hired or promoted supervisors and in conducting refresher courses for experienced supervisors. Some organizations have actually structured their supervisory training programs to correspond with the manual's table of contents. You can develop and use case studies to illustrate problems. Case studies can be particularly useful when discussing employment related safety issues. The manual can serve as a guide in deciding the right way to handle these hypothetical situations.