Code of Practice

on Separating, Collecting and Transporting Food Waste

to Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 1

Environmental Protection Department

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government

May 2018

PREFACE

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to provide guidance to food waste producers and collectors to assist them to comply with the requirements of food waste separation, collection and delivery to the Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 1 (ORRC1). It also provides specific operational arrangements and guidelines for unloading food waste at the ORRC1 and the associated inspection and monitoring requirements. It is important to ensure that the quality of food waste delivered to the ORRC1 is able to meet the plant requirements, so as to facilitate smooth and effective operation of the plant.

Enquiries concerning this guideline or the operational requirements may be addressed to the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) at:

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1 INTRODUCTION

In February 2014, the Government published "A Food Waste & Yard Waste Plan for Hong Kong 2014-2022" (the Plan) which outlines the Administration's target to reduce food waste disposed of at landfills by 40% in 2022 and maps out four strategies to tackle food waste, namely reduction at source, reuse and donation, recyclable collection, and turning food waste into energy.

The Organic Resources Recovery Centre 1 (ORRC1) at Siu Ho Wan, North Lantau, is a key project under the Plan. It can convert 200 tonnes per day (tpd) of food waste generated from the commercial and industrial (C&I) sectors to biogas as renewable energy as well as compost for agricultural use. Support from the C&I establishments in source separation and delivery of high quality food waste to the ORRC1 is crucial to its effective operation.

This Code of Practices (the "Code") is designed to provide guidance to food waste producers and collectors to assist them to comply with the requirements of food waste separation, storage, collection and delivery to the ORRC1.

2 DEFINITION OF FOOD WASTE

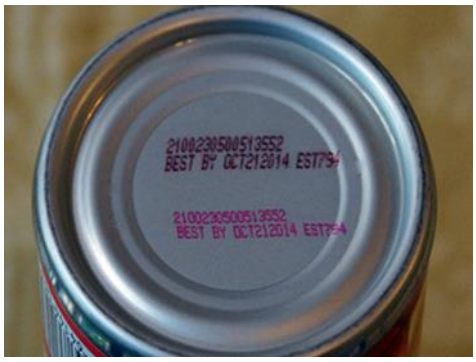
2.1 Source Separated Food Waste

Food waste is any waste, rather raw, cooked, edible and associated with inedible parts generated during food production, distribution, storage, meal preparation or consumption of meals. **Source Separated Food Waste (SSFW)** comprises of pre-consumed and post-consumed food waste (see Figure 1) that are separated from municipal solid waste (MSW) at source. Securing SSFW is a pre-requisite for good quality food waste intake at the ORRC1.

Figure 1 – Examples of Source Separated Food Waste

<table>
<tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Rotten fruits and vegetables</td></tr>
<tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr>
<tr><td>Fish and poultry organs and intestines</td><td>Meat trimmings, fats and residues</td></tr>
<tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Fruit and vegetable peelings, cores, pips and garnishes</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Meat, fish, fish scales, shellfish, shells, small bones</td></tr>
<tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Soup pulp, Chinese medicinal pulp</td></tr>
<tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr>
<tr><td>Tea leaves</td><td>Coffee grounds</td></tr>
<tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr>
<tr><td>Bread, cakes, biscuits and desserts</td><td>Egg shells</td></tr>
</table>

Plate scrapings and leftover of cooked food	Cereals of all types, e.g. rice, noodles, oats
	
Pet food	Food past its use-by-date
Others: Cheeses, ice-cream, yogurts, jam, sauces, condiments, BBQ raw and cooked leftovers, etc.	

2.2 Source Separated Food Waste Accepted by ORRC1

The ORRC1 adopts a biological process of anaerobic digestion (AD) and composting to convert food waste into biogas as renewable energy and compost. During the AD process, microorganisms will break down the organic matters in the food waste to produce biogas. Inert materials (see Figure 2) and some special types of food waste (e.g., oversized bones, clam shells and oyster shells, as shown in Figure 3) are not suitable for the biological decomposition process, they would disrupt the delicate AD process and may cause suspension of the plant operation, they should be separated at source from the food waste as far as practicable before delivering to the ORRC1 for treatment.

Figure 2 - Examples of inert materials mixed in food waste

Packaging materials, plastic wraps & bags, foamed polystryrene	Plastic straws and utensils
Metal cans, Aluminum foils, glass bottles	Ropes and threads, toothpicks, tissue papers, teabags

Figure 3 - Special type of food waste NOT accepted by ORRC1

Oversized bones	Clam shells and oyster shells

It is impractical to expect all of the inert materials could be removed from the food waste at source, therefore, the ORRC1 is provided with pre-treatment facilities to remove a maximum of 20% of inert materials that my still be found in the delivered SSFW, i.e. the ORRC1 could only intake SSFW containing less than 20% by weight of inert materials. Any individual load of SSFW delivered to the ORRC1 should not exceed the set limit of 20% of inert materials.

2.3 Non-Permitted Waste

The ORRC1 **does not** accept the following types of wastes which are classified as "**non-permitted waste**":

- Green waste and yard waste including leaves, grass and woody waste;
- Sludge from sewage and waste treatment works including dewatered sludge;
- Liquid animal or livestock waste, whether treated or untreated, stabilized or non-stabilized, including spent litter and manure compost and other waste generated by livestock;
- Excremental waste, which is mainly night soil, sludge from septic tanks and aqua privies;
- Abattoir waste that includes solid and semi-solid waste generated from abattoirs and slaughterhouses;
- Animal carcasses that comprise dead animals; and
- Grease trap and gulley waste.

3 COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS IN HANDLING FOOD WASTE

3.1 Key Stakeholders

The ORRC1 primarily treats SSFW from the C&I sectors. The key stakeholders are identified in Table 1.

Table 1 – List of key stakeholders

Key Stakeholders	**Definition**
Food Waste Producers	C&I enterprises involved in the food business, such as food factories, fast food outlets, cafes, canteens, cooked food stalls, supermarkets, food markets, bakeries, groceries, fruit stalls, butcheries and all types of food producers and retailers. Institutions that provide food, including hotels, restaurants, schools and colleges providing meals to students, hospitals providing meals to patients, elderly homes providing meals to tenants, and airlines providing meals to passengers, as well as companies that provide staff meals, etc. could all play an active part to reduce food waste.
Property Management Companies	Companies responsible for the management of shopping malls, wet markets, wholesale food markets, hotels, airport, resorts and institutions, etc.
Cleansing Contractors	Contractors managed by the property management companies to provide cleansing services for shopping malls, wet markets, wholesale food markets, hotels, airport, resorts and institutions, etc.
Registered Food Waste Collectors	Food waste collectors successfully registered with the EPD and obtained valid registration certificate.

3.2 General Roles and Responsibility of Stakeholders

A simplified flow diagram for proper source separation, collection, delivery and recycling of SSFW is shown in Figure 4. Food waste to be delivered to the ORRC-1 for treatment should be segregated from MSW and other waste streams at the point of arising and packaged properly for temporary on-site storage in a hygiene manner while pending for delivery by registered food waste collectors (RFWCs). To facilitate proper

disposal of food waste from the points of generation to the ORRC1, collaborative efforts among food waste producers, property management companies, cleansing contractors and RFWCs are important. The roles and responsibilities of each party are shown in Table 2.

Figure 4 - Flow diagram of source separation, collection and delivery of food waste to ORRC1

(1) Food waste producers/ property management companies or cleansing contractors to provide food waste collection bins of suitable size.

(2) Food waste producers to separate food waste at source.

(3) Food waste producers to pack and store SSFW in collection bins.

(4) Cleansing contractor to tow the collection bins to designated loading point assigned by property management companies.

(5) RFWCs to collect & deliver SSFW to ORRC1.

(6) ORRC1 operator to properly recycle SSFW

For the establishments located within a property (say shopping mall, resort or institutions) that are managed by a property management company, it would be more cost-effective if the property management company could organize a central food waste collection service for their food and beverages tenants. For food waste producers located at the street level, they may need to arrange for their own food waste collection service.

Table 2 – Roles and responsibility of key stakeholders

Key Stakeholders	**Roles and Responsibility**
Food Waste Producers	1. Carry out separation of food waste from MSW; 2. Provide adequate number of bins of appropriate sizes with proper labels; 3. Dispose SSFW in appropriate bins clearly marked as for food waste for temporary storage; 4. Provide temporary storage space for the bins; 5. Empty and clean the bins at adequate frequency to prevent odour, vermin or health issues; 6. Provide education, training, communication to employees with regards to good practices of separation of food waste from MSW.
Property Management Companies/ Food Waste Producers (where appropriate)	1. Provide adequate number of bins with proper numbering labels; 2. Provide designated loading area for bins ready for collection and delivery to the ORRC1; 3. Determine and agree with the RFWCs on the type of bins or containers required to facilitate inspection and transportation.
Cleansing Contractors/ Property Management Companies (where appropriate)	1. Make arrangements with the RFWCs for collection and transportation of SSFW to the ORRC1; 2. Clean the bins regularly to avoid build-up of contaminants and odours (this service may also be outsourced to a third party).
Registered Food Waste Collectors	1. Ensure that SSFW is transported in such a way that odor and leachate is contained and that contamination of the collected food waste is prevented during collection, transportation and delivery to the ORRC1; 2. Weigh and record the amount of food waste collected at each collection points; 3. Inspect, record and take photos of any food waste found

	to be non-compliant at the collection points and notify the venue management; 4. Fill in the SSFW record form for submission at the gate of the ORRC1.
ORRC1 Operators	1. Conduct regular inspection to ensure all SSFW entering the ORRC1 comply with the plant requirements; 2. Keep proper records of all SSFW entering and treated at the ORRC1.

3.3 Additional Responsibilities of Food Waste Producers

As the design treatment capacity of the ORRC1 is limited to 200 tpd, the EPD has to keep close monitoring of the amount of SSFW delivered to the ORRC1 so as to maintain its optimum treatment capacity at all times.

C&I food waste producers who intend to deliver SSFW to the ORRC1 should complete the Expression of Interest (EOI) Proforma at **Annex A**, indicating the estimated amount and location of food waste generation and return the completed Proforma to the EPD.

In future if and when the demand for delivery and recycling food waste exceeds the design capacity of the ORRC1, an appropriate quota allocation scheme would be considered and put in place to fairly and transparently distribute the operational capacity of the facility to the food waste producers based on a set of objective criteria including location of food waste generation, quantity of food waste, participation and performance records of food waste producers (e.g. quality of food waste delivered in the past), etc.

3.4 Additional Responsibilities of Food Waste Collectors

Waste collectors who intend to provide food waste collection services, and to transport and deliver SSFW to the ORRC1 are required to register with the EPD as a Registered Food Waste Collector (RFWC) by completing the Food Waste Collector Registration Form at **Annex B** and return the completed form together with the required documents as specified in the Annex to the EPD. Additional guidelines for RFWCs are contained in **Annex D**.

Should any non-compliant food waste delivered by a RFWC be found during on-site visual inspection at the ORRC1, warning letters will be issued to the RFWC. Upon receipt of three warning letters by the same collector within the registration period, the EPD will revoke the RFWC's registration and inform the affected food waste producers of the revocation.

3.5 Support from the EPD

To provide support and facilitation on the proper recycling of SSFW, the EPD can help arrange training sessions with participating stakeholders upon request. We could provide the line management and frontline staff of all committed C&I enterprises with technical support on how to separate food waste at source, as well as on collection and transportation logistics through briefings/ trainings and site visits.

Figure 5 – The EPD providing support to key stakeholders on food waste recycling

4 SOURCE SEPARATION AND STORAGE OF FOOD WASTE

To ensure effective operation, the ORRC1 is specified as a designated waste disposal facility in Schedule 1 to the Waste Disposal (Designated Waste Disposal Facility) Regulation (Cap. 354L), and the designated officers are vested with the necessary powers to carry out proper monitoring and control for the facility (e.g. only properly SSFW from the C&I sectors can be given access into the ORRC1 for treatment).

4.1 Source Separation of Food Waste

The ORRC1 will only intake SSFW containing less than 20% by weight of inert materials (see Figures 6 and 7). Therefore, any load of food waste delivered to the ORRC1 should be source separated properly in accordance with the requirements set in this section.

Figure 6 - Samples of food waste containing over 20% by weight of inert materials which are not accepted at ORRC1

Figure 7 - Samples of food waste with less than 20% by weight of inert materials which are suitable for recycling at ORRC1.

Pre-consumed food waste is relatively easier to separate at source during meal preparation. It is recommended that a small container be placed adjacent to the meal preparation area to facilitate the separation for disposal (see Figure 8).

Figure 8 – Source separation of pre-consumed food waste

Post-consumed food waste is usually separated manually. Cleansing workers should dispose of food waste and inert materials sorted out in two separate bins (see Figure 9). For food waste producers who handle a large amount of post-consumed food waste, e.g. catering services providers and food manufactures, it is recommended to use a semi-automatic conveyor belt system.

Figure 9 – Source Separation of post-consumed food waste

Excessive water contained in food waste, e.g. syrup and soup, should be avoided and drained off by sieves to facilitate collection and delivery (see Figure 10).

Figure 10 – Drain off excessive water before collection

Please note: food waste residues collected after dish washing are not suitable for recycling because the detergent remained in the food waste will affect the AD process.

4.2 Storage of SSFW

Odour control is a major challenge in handling food waste because it decomposes quickly and creates odour, especially in a hot kitchen environment. Collection bins for containing SSFW shall be leak-proof, impervious to moisture and provided with lids that close tightly and securely so as to prevent odour, vermin and health issues. They shall be easily cleaned such that any residue food waste would not adhere to the bins after rinsing. Food waste producers should make arrangement with cleansing contractors or RFWCs to ensure collection bins are washed at regular intervals.

The water content and density of SSFW are usually higher compared to MSW and are therefore relatively heavier. Food waste collection bins (FWCBs) should be filled up to at most 70% of their volume to avoid possible spillage. They shall be robust and free from corrosion, with close fitting lids and seals fully effective. FWCBs which are damaged or may cause leakage of leachate or odour escape shall not be used. They shall be of a size that can be handled and maneuvered manually by at most two persons without the risk of strain or other injuries, especially when loading/unloading food waste from a transport vehicle. Typical sizes of FWCBs are shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11 – Examples of proper food waste collection bins

For environmental reasons, we do not recommend food waste producers to use plastic bags for containing food waste. However, if its use is inevitable for hygienic or operational reasons, it is recommended to use transparent and decomposable, heavy duty plastic bags (see Figure 12 for an example) for food waste storage and delivery, which are strong enough to hold the food waste without any leakage or breakage, and would facilitate RFWCs to conduct proper visual checking before collection. In addition, the plastic bags should not be colored in red or yellow to avoid mixing with the standard clinical waste bags. If food waste collectors/ food waste producers would like to adopt green procurement, the following two links contain the desirable requirements for green procurement of degradable bags and a list of potential local suppliers (not specifically endorsed by the Government) for general reference:

http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/how_help/green_procure/green_procure1.html
https://www.wastereduction.gov.hk/en/household/Supplier_List.html

Figure 12 –Example of transparent and decomposable plastic bags

4.3 Labelling

Every FWCBs must bear a proper label as shown in Figure 13 to distinguish them from the bins for MSW collection. The label can be collected at EPD's office upon prior request and must be securely affixed on a prominent position of the FWCB allowing the label information to be read easily. It is recommended that reference bin numbers should be assigned by the RFWCs to each FWCB to facilitate recording of its weight/ capacity.

Figure 13 – Labels for FWCBs (to be confirmed)

4.4 Storage of Food Waste Collection Bins

The working space in most food waste generating premises is rather limited for accommodating large 240L FWCBs. It is recommended that both pre-consumed and post-consumed SSFW be first temporarily stored in smaller bins, and then emptied to larger bins at adequate frequency to prevent odour, vermin or health issues. All the bins must be regularly cleansed.

To facilitate efficient and cost-effective mode of delivery of SSFW to the ORRC1, it is recommended that SSFW originally stored in smaller bins be

transferred to 240L FWCBs (see Figure 14) which shall be kept at suitable designated loading areas (usually near but segregated from the MSW loading area) for temporary on-site storage before collection and delivery by the RFWCs. Floor markings, signs or posters should be provided at the loading areas to distinguish them from the loading areas reserved for MSW.

Figure 14 – Transferring SSFW from smaller collection bins to 240L FWCBs to facilitate delivery

Example of collection points for 240L FWCBs

5 COLLECTION AND TRANSPORTATION OF FOOD WASTE

5.1 Collection of SSFW

SSFW must not be collected or transported together with MSW or other types of wastes by the regular refuse collection vehicles (RCV), it shall be collected and transported by registered food waste collectors (RFWCs) only. RFWCs are required to comply with the requirements specified in food waste collector registration guidelines at **Annex B**, and in full compliance with the ORRC1 operation requirements as stipulated in the guidelines at **Annex D**. A list of RFWCs is available at the EPD homepage (see the link below) for reference, and the list will be updated from time to time.

http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/prob_solutions/FWCD_to_ORRC1.html

RFWCs may provide additional services to food waste producers, such as provision of labeled food waste containers, degradable plastic bags and the associated bin cleansing services. In such circumstances, the RFWCs should properly package and label the waste in accordance with the requirements as set out in Section 4 of the Code. Waste containers/ bins provided by RFWCs should bear the RFWCs' names and/ or assigned reference bin numbers for identification of the responsible RFWCs.

5.2 SSFW Collection Vehicles

Food waste in general has high water content and decomposes quickly, therefore, special attention is required when transporting SSFW. RFWCs shall ensure that there is no leachate dripping or odour emission from the collection vehicles during transportation of SSFW so as not to contravene the relevant legislations enforced by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, such as the Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation (Chapter 132BK) under the Laws of Hong Kong.

5.3.1 Types of Food Waste Collection Vehicles (FWCVs)

Depending on the water content of the SSFW, ordinary RCVs equipped with compact units, which are commonly used to collect MSW, may not be suitable for transporting of SSFW. RFWCs are required to use other suitable vehicles or modify their existing collection fleet to suit for SSFW

collection and transportation.

For SSFW with high water content, the following two types of FWCVs, namely, side loader and tail gate truck (see Figure 15), are considered more suitable. When determining the type of vehicles to be adopted for SSFW delivery, the stakeholders should take into account the considerations tabulated below.

Table 3 – Types of Food Waste Collection Vehicles

	Side Loaders	**Tail Gate Trucks**
Descriptions	Vehicle with sealed containers where SSFW is discharged into the sealed containers from FWCBs at the collection points.	Vehicle with an enclosed compartment and a lifting platform at the back, SSFW is transported in 240L FWCBs.
Capacity	5 - 7 tonnes	3 - 4 tonnes
Height Restriction	Need to allow extra clearance for bin lifting operations, and need to check height clearance of the loading area.	Below standard parking height clearance of most loading areas.
Space for FWCVs to operate	Require less space	Require more space
Spare collection bins	FWCBs could be returned immediately after SSFW is discharged at the collection points. No need to make allowance for spare bins.	FWCBs could only be returned after SSFW is unloaded at the ORRC1. Need to allow spare bins for SSFW collection.
Time for unloading	Shorter	Longer

Figure 15 – Types of Food Waste Collection Vehicles

Side Loader

Tail Gate Truck

5.3.2 Display of Identification Labels

RFWCs must display a laminated identification label (see Figure 16) provided by the EPD upon successful registration. The label should be conspicuously placed at the lower left-hand corner of the windshield of the FWCV. FWCVs without identification labels will not be allowed to enter the ORRC1.

Figure 16 – Identification label for Registered Food Waste Collectors

5.4 Inspection and Record Keeping

Before loading of SSFW to the FWCVs, RFWCs must check to ensure the food waste is properly source separated in accordance with the requirements as specified in Section 2. If non-compliant food waste is found at the collection points, the RFWCs should take photos for record and notify the respective management of the venue. Upon receipt of notification from the RFWCs and/ or the venue management, the EPD shall conduct inspection and follow up with the food waste producers and provide them with appropriate advices.

Any non-compliant food waste delivered to the ORRC1 will be rejected and the RFWC will be responsible for transferring the rejected waste to refuse transfer stations or landfills for disposal at their own cost.

Moreover, RFWCs should keep clear records of the amount and quality of SSFW collected at each collection points by filling in the Food Waste Collection & Delivery Record form at **Annex C**.

The record must include the following information:

- The company name and registration number;
- The deliver's name and license plate number of vehicle used for delivery;
- The date and time of delivery of the SSFW;
- The food waste collection points;
- The number of FWCBs, reference bin no. and total weight of the food waste collected (if available).

The duly completed record form should be submitted to the ORRC operator upon entering the gate of the plant. The operator shall fill in the remaining information on the record form, stamp it and return a scanned copy of the completed form together with the weighbridge in and out records of the FWCV to the driver when the vehicle leaves the plant. The RFWCs must keep copies of the scanned form and produce such copies to the EPD for inspection upon request.

The food waste producers shall also keep proper record of the food waste (e.g. the number of collection bins, approximate total weight) they have placed at the collection points for collection by the RFWCs they employ.

5.5 Training and Safety Measures

RFWCs should provide adequate training to the staff involved in the collection service and take appropriate measures such as setting up safety management systems, conduct regular safety training, seminars and refreshment courses, and providing effective personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure employees' occupational safety.

6 OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENT AT ORRC1

6.1 Operational Guidelines for RFWCs Using ORRC1

The ORRC1 is the first large scale recycling plant specifically designed for treating food waste with many different types of systems and equipment installed in a very compact site in Hong Kong. Some of the plant operations (e.g. generation of biogas, storage of biogas and the use of biogas for electricity generation) follow a series of specific and stringent operation and safety requirements. Hence, RFWCs and their staff including the drivers and vehicle staff involved in handling SSFW should have relevant experiences and appropriate training, and must strictly observe and follow the *Operational Guidelines for Registered Food Waste Collectors* at **Annex D**, so that the ORRC1 can provide a safe environment and effective service for the treatment of the SSFW.

6.2 Inspection at ORRC1

To ensure safe and efficient operation, ORRC1 operator shall randomly select about 20% of the SSFW delivered to the plant for on-site inspection and sampling. RFWCs are required to cooperate fully when their vehicles are selected for inspection and sampling.

The ORRC1 is a designated waste disposal facility under Schedule 1 to the Waste Disposal (Designated Waste Disposal Facility) Regulation (Cap. 354L). Under the Regulation, ORRC1 operator has the authority to reject non-compliant SSFW, which contains non-recyclable materials and/ or other impurities exceeding 20% by weight, or non-permitted waste, and to request the waste to be diverted by the RFWCs who deliver it to other designated waste disposal facilities (i.e. the landfills, refuse transfer stations, etc.) listed in Appendix 1 of the Waste Disposal Regulation at their own cost.

6.3 Other Requirements and Points to Note

Upon entering the ORRC1 the RFWCs and the staff involved:

- Shall be vigilant and alert and be familiar with the emergency procedures and fire evacuation plans;

- Shall always keep safety as the highest priority, comply with on-site safety rules and regulations, and wear proper PPE (reflective vest, safety helmet, safety shoes, etc.);

- Shall comply with on-site traffic rules and regulations, note the FWCV height limit of 4.5m. In case of an accident, notify the facility operators/ staff and follow their instructions;

- Shall keep the site/ facility clean and the roads within the site unblocked. All spillage or leakage incidents should be reported to the facility operators/ staff;

- Shall note that no smoking within the site or inside the facility buildings, and no eating or drinking while handling the SSFW. Photos or video taking is not allowed without prior permission. The ORRC1 is equipped with CCTV to record and monitor the site activities and plant operations.

- Shall keep a suitable clearance from and not to hit the gate bars at the weighbridge or the wheel stoppers in the food waste reception building tipping bay areas; and

- Shall observe and comply with all requirements under relevant Environmental (e.g. discharge of cleansing water, operation noise; Transport (vehicle license); Environmental Hygiene (e.g. odour emission, leakage of leachate); Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation; and Occupational Safety & Health (e.g. PPE, safety training) ordinances and regulations.

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