



Agenda Item:

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## COUNCIL COMMUNICATION City Manager's Office

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Agenda Date: 04/19/04  
No.: 04-187  
Agenda Item Type: Receive/File  
No.:

Communication

Roll Call

Submitted by: Thomas G. Turner, Human Resources Director

### SUBJECT—

2003 Annual Occupational Health and Safety Report.

### SYNOPSIS—

Receive and file the 2003 Annual Occupational Health and Safety Report.

### FISCAL IMPACT—

None.

### RECOMMENDATION—

Approval.

### BACKGROUND—

Attached is the 2003 Annual Occupational Health and Safety Report. Total injury costs increased by \$32,000 to \$2,319,426 (see page 13). The increase is primarily attributable to permanency costs. These are costs denominated as permanent partial disability payments for employees covered by Workers' Compensation under Iowa Code Chapter 85. These costs increased approximately \$184,000 with \$180,000 of that increased attributable to the solid waste operations (see page 16). Current injury costs defined as indemnity and medical costs declined approximately \$150,000 with the biggest reduction in the cost of medical treatments for active sworn fire fighters (see pages 14 and 15). The solid waste division incurred approximately a \$104,000 increase in current injury costs in 2003 over 2002. This is thought to be due to the automated truck phase-in not being fully implemented until the second half of the year. This

equipment change appears to be having the desired positive impact in current injuries through the first quarter of 2004.

The best news of the report is the statistical information regarding current injuries on pages 4 through 12. All categories show a decline from 2002 levels. The most noteworthy reduction is the OSHA Incidence Rate. This is a measure of the number of injuries per 100 employees per year. The OSHA Incidence Rate declined from 16 in 2002 to 12 in 2003, the lowest level experienced by the City in more than 20 years. This is thought to be directly related to the establishment of worker safety committees at the field level to address and reduce workplace hazards.

This reduction in the frequency of current injuries should show a positive financial impact in the next and succeeding years permanency costs. Injury settlements often lag from one to two years from the date the injury was incurred. However, it must be noted, that a single severe injury can offset substantial progress made in overall injury rate reductions. The City has incurred a significant injury early in 2004 involving a sworn police officer.