

Appendix 2

Adverse Weather Report

February 2011



December 2010 – Verdant vehicles queuing at the Sutton Courtenay landfill site.

Background

In December 2010 a period of bad weather affected collections in South Oxfordshire and Vale. This occurred the week before Christmas and resulted in two full collection days (Monday and Tuesday) being suspended.

Because conditions were predicted to be bad for the rest of the week it was agreed with the council that collections would resume as normal on Wednesday as far as was practical to do so (some smaller roads and closes were still unable to be accessed). Lessons learnt from 2009/10 adverse weather meant strategic decisions were made earlier, and the plan of action going forward could be carried out more efficiently.

It was agreed to carry on with the published Christmas collection schedule to avoid further disruptions and those residents who missed a collection at the start of the week would be able to put side waste out on their next scheduled collection. If collections had not reverted back to normal collections, the Christmas collection calendar catch ups would have gone on into February, almost two months after the adverse weather hit. By sticking to the calendar and collecting side waste on the next collections, disruptions were kept to a minimum.

Verdant's inclement weather policy

Verdant employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to get to work, adapting their means of travel if necessary. Verdant recognizes the need to safely maintain services during adverse weather conditions, whilst properly discharging its duty of care to employees.

All employees are expected to present themselves for duty, this may mean, with management approval, alternative duties may be given where it is not safe to carry out normal duties.

Re-deployment of resources

Where possible staff were deployed to help clear snow in the main town centres to clear pavements, walkways and the councils car parks.

This involved using Verdant's fleet of street cleansing vehicles, utilized to carry the equipment and grit/sand.

The garden waste collections were suspended during the disruptions and into January. The vehicles and crews were used to help collect extra waste that was presented by those households that had missed a collection. It has been agreed going forward that there will be no garden waste collections over the two week Christmas period. The garden waste crews will be utilized to collect the increased volumes of recycling normally put out over this period.

Communications

Prior to the bad weather in December Verdant had delivered a bin hanger to all residents informing them of the Christmas collection dates. Other methods of communicating the collection days included a series of radio advertisements, updating the council website, informing all the parish/town councils and putting out press releases.

During the periods of disruption, the following communications were put out to ensure as many residents as possible were made aware of the changes to the waste collection arrangements:

- regular website updates
- weekly press releases
- parish and town council updates
- posters in main towns and villages
- council 'text' alerts to mobile phones – for those residents signed up to the scheme
- radio updates (Heart and Fox FM)
- Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP) radio adverts and updates

Residents were told to follow their calendar for the correct collection day and which bin would be collected. Anyone that missed a collection would be able to put out extra waste (approx 3 black bags if on refuse week) which would be collected on their next scheduled collection.

Future action points

In the event of a repeat of extreme weather conditions that affect refuse and recycling collections, the following actions should be followed:

Operations

Action	Verdant/Council
Follow scenarios a,b,c below depending on scale of disruption.	Verdant
8am deadline for operational decisions to be made between council and Verdant.	Verdant/Council
Updates midday and late afternoon/early evening.	Verdant
Email council list of outstanding roads/areas by the end of the day.	Verdant
Use supervisor vans to deploy more staff and snow clearing equipment.	Verdant
Organise central working points close to where staff live.	Verdant
Swap the barrows for mobile gritting units in the seven main town centres, prior to snow fall.	Verdant
Utilization of the garden waste vehicles.	Verdant
Ensure adequate supply and storage of salt/grit.	Council
Increase no. of grit bins in public areas i.e. council leisure centres etc.	Council

Operational scenarios:

- a) 1 day disruption = collections will be one day late (ensure tips are open for Saturday catch up).
- b) 2 days disruption = collections will be two days late in the initial week of disruption and one day late in the next week following a Saturday catch up. For example :-

Normal collection day	Revised collection day
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Saturday
Friday	Monday
Monday	Tuesday
Tuesday	Wednesday
Wednesday	Thursday
Thursday	Friday
Friday	Saturday

If catch up for scenario's (a) and (b) can not be achieved prior to a Christmas calendar starting then refer to scenario (c) below. Also where certain roads still cannot be accessed these will be collected on the next scheduled collection as per scenario (c)

3 days or more = revert back to current calendar when collections resume and collect all excess waste and recycling for the next two weeks from properties which have missed collections.

Communications

Action	Verdant/Council
Provide operational updates – 8am, midday and afternoon. Evening email with what is outstanding.	Verdant
Script – for all staff both Verdant and Councils. Daily staff briefings to go through the script.	Verdant/Council
Posters/information – send to council /communications to send out to parishes/councilors and encourage door stepping.	Verdant/Council

Look into diverting call centre number to a mobile phone held by the call centre manager.	Verdant
Daily town/parish and councilor email	Councils
Text and email alert system – (increase numbers on alert system). Be specific to each district i.e. which bin to put out.	Councils
Regular website updates.	Verdant/Council
Phone system updates (recorded messages am and pm)	Verdant/Council
Radio updates	Council/OWP
Call newspapers – update their websites	Council
Disable postcode search	Council