

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT, Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Khalil Zaied, Acting Director
Abel Wolman Municipal Building, 6th Floor.
200 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

June 26, 2024

Ms. Isabel Mercedes Cumming, Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
City Hall, Room 635
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

RE: DPW Response to OIG Case #24-0784-C Referral, dated 6/20/2024

Dear Inspector General Cumming:

I am writing to confirm receipt of and provide feedback on Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Referral 24-0784-C, dated June 20, 2024 (the "Referral"). The Referral references a complaint regarding the inoperable ice machines and failure to provide adequate water, fans, or air conditioning for employees at the Department of Public Works ("DPW") Cherry Hill yard at 701 Reedbird Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21225.

DPW is committed to ensuring the well-being of employees in all our facilities throughout the Baltimore Metropolitan area. Furthermore, providing work environments for the employees that are free from each recognized hazard that is causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm is one of the DPW's primary goals under the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Act (MOSH). Please note that DPW shall implement strict operational scrutiny to make changes and improvements to provide an optimal work environment for our employees, as well as shall task DPW's Office of Environmental Regulatory and Safety Compliance (ERCS) to oversee the implementation and changes. This letter is to outline the steps DPW staff have taken to address the issues raised in the Referral.

We recognize the importance of hydration, especially during the high temperatures. To ensure all employees have access to safe and clean drinking water, we have implemented the following measures:

1. All ice machines will be put on a regular maintenance schedule to minimize breakdowns. I signed a temporary justification for ice that can be handed out daily until the machines are operating.
2. All load packers without A/C are being taken to DGS for the repair of two vehicles at a time until all the A/C are functioning.
3. The staff at Reedbird have been instructed to go inside the main trailer to use it as a cooling station. The parts were purchased to power the attendant booth, and we hope that the work will be completed within 10 working days. The locker room in question is being evaluated for repairing the A/C. Please note that the A/C unit is an outdated model with parts difficult to obtain. We will install a temporary A/C unit if the old unit cannot be repaired.
4. 4,800 bottles of Gatorade that were purchased earlier this month have arrived and have been handed out to staff.
5. 744 Class 3 High-Vis moisture wear T-shirts were ordered to wear in place of uniforms on extreme heat days. This is for all sites of DPW Solid Waste Bureau.

Thank you for your continued partnership and attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact Craig Jeter, Bureau Head of Solid Waste, at Craig.Jeter@baltimorecity.gov, if you need further information.

Sincerely,

Khalil Zaied

Khalil Zaied
Acting Director

Cc: Richard Luna, Deputy Director
Craig Jeter, Bureau Head, Solid Waste
LaToya Cutris, Chief of Staff