During prolonged periods of cold or wet weather it is more likely rough sleepers will seek shelter in Commercial Waste Bin(s).

Please be extra vigilant during this time.

**Preventing injury to people sleeping rough in Commercial Waste Bin(s)**

Guidance for Businesses and Contractors

This guidance is about preventing serious injury to people, including children, who may enter, play in or take shelter in commercial waste bins, communal domestic bins or charity bins.

A particularly vulnerable population at risk of injury in large waste bins is rough sleepers who may seek refuge.

What businesses are most at risk

1. Businesses with bins with a capacity of over 660 litres.
2. Businesses located in areas where rough sleeping is known to be a problem.
3. Businesses in areas where there have been previous instances of people being found in waste storage areas and bins.
4. Businesses that store dry, ‘comfortable’ wastes known to be attractive to those seeking shelter e.g. paper, card, carpet and textiles.
5. Businesses that have bin storage areas in quiet locations with low footfall.
6. Businesses that have unsecured bin stores or unlockable bins.

Reducing and managing Risk

All employers have a legal duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of people who may be affected by their work activities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

To reduce and manage the risks, you should consider:

**Risk Management**

Look at the risks, assess how serious they are and decide how to reduce them.

Any risk assessment should include all significant aspects relating to the storage and collection of commercial waste, including the possibility of people in bins.

**Controls**

Put measures in place to control the environment around the bins and introduce work practices to reduce the likelihood of harm.

**Reporting incidents**

If a person is found in a bin, is injured and/ or taken from the site of the accident to a hospital for treatment, a report must be made to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995.

**Training**

Train staff how to recognise the signs of rough sleeping in waste storage areas and bins, and what to do if they find someone.

Control measures to consider

1. **Bang** on the side of the bin.
2. **Lift the lid** of the bin and take a look. Staff must not put themselves at risk by climbing up or standing on stacked waste.
3. **Check the bin’s content**. Do not rummage by hand.
4. **Any unusual items.** Does the bin contain the type of waste expected? Check if there are items indicating it might be used or occupied e.g. carrier bags, rucksacks, luggage, bags, quilts, sleeping bags, blankets, etc.
5. **Ensure your waste contractor is aware** of any local problem that you may have noticed.
6. **Locking bins,** particularly overnight or when premises are unstaffed, minimises the risk of bins being occupied and reduces other hazards, such as fire.

Further information and support

1. Health and Safety Executive – [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
2. Leeds City Council’s Street Outreach Team – 0113 2459445 or leeds.sos@cgl.org.uk
3. Leeds City Council’s Anti-Social Behaviour Team - 0113 2224402 or LASBT@leeds.gov.uk