

# **THE TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL, ONTARIO**

**“AS A MUNICIPALITY, WE  
TRY TO ALWAYS APPLY BEST  
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OUR INDUSTRIES”**





Richmond Hill is an urban center, with a population of 185,000 people and a municipal fleet of 130 commercial vehicles to serve them. Since 2007, those vehicles have been inspected using The Checker inspection books.

Richmond Hill's fleet supervisor, Rodney Young—who has been with Richmond Hill for 26 years, serving as fleet supervisor since about 1996—remembers the dramatic impact The Checker had when his department began using it.

## Attention to Detail

Before The Checker, the fleet used a self-created “simple book” of its own, Young said. It only required checking off basic field check items—fuel, brakes, lights.

**“Before, basically, they just walked around the truck doing a cursory inspection since there was no detailed “checklist” just a vague list of items to be checked,” Young said.**

But after the fleet began using The Checker, it became apparent that many vehicles hadn't been receiving the attention they needed between services.

“When we started using the book what we found was that we were getting a lot more work orders on the vehicles,” Young said.

The Checker “reminded operators of details they probably never would have looked at,” and its use revealed some training shortcomings, Young added. “Some operators weren't as familiar as they needed to be with how their vehicles should operate.”

“The Checker was good because it gave them the information to determine what the problem is or to come in and ask the right questions,” Young said. “They have a better basis for asking questions.”

Most operators understood the importance of more-detailed inspections, but feared that they would cut into their time. However, operators soon realized that—although The Checker inspection did require a little more time to adequately check the vehicles—it didn't take as long as they thought it would.

For its part, management had to reinforce the concept that thorough inspections are a valuable use of time, and this involved management's own realization that conducting proper inspections takes more time than a simple walk-around.

"Management had to realize that the truck can't leave at 7:30 a.m. if the driver arrives at 7:30 a.m. You have to take the time to do the inspection," Young said.



## **Return on Investment**

But Young has no doubt that the time is well spent, resulting in greater employee and public safety. Unsafe vehicles put many people at risk, he pointed out. The Checker also allows problems to be caught before they become more costly, he said.

One key feature of The Checker for Young is that each inspection book clearly states which problems should cause the operator not to operate the vehicle and which aren't enough to prevent operation, but should be flagged for later maintenance attention.

## **Leading the Way**

The Checker provides for "over and above" rather than just the legal requirements for inspection documentation, but the extra attention to detail provides for a best practice approach, Young said.

"As a municipality, we try to always apply best practices and lead by example for other in our industries," he said. "The Checker is the example of how inspections should be done."



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Toll Free      800 291 4719  
Telephone    905 825 0172  
Fax            905 469 8831  
Email         info@thechecker.net

## **THECHECKER.NET**

PO Box 265  
146 Lakeshore Rd W.  
Oakville, Ontario  
Canada L6K 0A4

2316 Delaware Ave., #611  
Buffalo, New York  
USA  
14216-2687

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