

MARCH 24, 2020

COVID-19 | FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do you maintain protocol in hoist operations?

Post signage that limits a low number of occupants (necessary to maintain distance according to space) at all times inside the hoist/elevator. Avoid direct face to face contact. No direct conversations to the occupants during the operation. Wash and sanitize your hands before and after entering the hoist. Cough and sneeze into your elbow.

2. What does social distancing mean for construction operations?

Maintain a minimum of 2 meters and avoid direct face to face contact with others. Establish alternating days or extra shifts the reduce the total number of employees in a work area at any given time.

3. What protocol to follow when you must work with 2 or more workers close by?

Besides enhanced cleaning procedures, workers must be provided with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19 risk factors and protective behaviors (e.g. cough etiquette and care of PPE)

4. What are acceptable washing facilities for construction workers?

The minimum standard is to have running hot water with soap available to the workers. Post signage to identify the location and post operation procedures next to the facility.

5. How do we maintain sanitary washing facilities?

Clean and disinfect the facility on a regular basis at least at the beginning, before lunch or break time, and at the end of each shift. Acceptable disinfectants: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>

6. How can the virus be transmitted?

According to current data the virus is transmitted by:

- Breathing in droplets in the air that are generated when people cough or sneeze.
- Close contact with other people (e.g. shaking hands or hugging).
- Touching contaminated surfaces and then touching the face, mouth, or food.
- Touching a contaminated surface and then touching another surface may cause the virus to transfer from one surface to another.

7. How can I request to be tested?

Please follow the link below for a self-assessment tool and support app: <https://bc.thrive.health/>

8. Can I use my right to refuse unsafe work if I feel my employer is not following proper protocols?

Every worker has the right to refuse to work in unsafe work conditions. Workers must follow company specific reporting procedures that meet a minimum standard as per OHSR 3.12:

Steps to follow when work might be unsafe:

1. Report the unsafe condition or procedure

- As a worker, you must immediately report the unsafe condition to a supervisor or employer.
- As a supervisor or employer, you must investigate the matter and fix it if possible. If you decide the worker's concern is not valid, report back to the worker.

2. If a worker still views work as unsafe after a supervisor or employer has said it is safe to perform a job or task

- As a supervisor or employer, you must investigate the problem and ensure any unsafe condition is fixed.
- This investigation must take place in the presence of the worker and a worker representative of the joint health and safety committee or a worker chosen by the worker's trade union. If there is no safety committee or representing trade union at the workplace, the worker who first reported the unsafe condition can choose to have another worker present at the investigation.

3. If a worker still views work as unsafe, notify WorkSafeBC

- If the matter is not resolved, the worker and the supervisor or employer must contact WorkSafeBC. A prevention officer will then investigate and take steps to find a workable solution.

9. Do I get paid if I self-isolate or go into self-quarantine?

On March 23rd, the government of British Columbia has announced job protection measures to help workers who are required to self isolate. For more information on these programs, please visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support> or call 1 888 COVID-19.

10. Where do I find more information on how to manage Stress, Anxiety and Depression amongst my workforce?

The government has published a bulletin to help employer find resources and information related to mental health, which can be accessed here: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health-safety/covid19/stressmanagement_5_accessible.pdf

11. A foreman is COVID-19 presumptive, should the entire crew be isolated?

According to the BC COVID-19 self-assessment tool and WorkSafeBC guidance they do not all need to be isolated (unless they have been advised to do so by health professionals). They should observe social/physical distancing protocols, hand washing, cough/sneeze etiquette, and surface cleaning. However, due to the limited availability of tests which could confirm that foreman does or does not in fact have the virus we must treat all presumptive cases as positive to err on the side of caution therefore reducing the potential exposure to society in general. It would be best for the crew to isolate.

12. If workers distance on site but aggregate on breaks off site, should they be permitted re-entry?

This will be determined by your company policy which will need to address such things as breaks for workers and how many can safely be in the lunchrooms or smoking areas, when and where toolbox meeting will be held. It is up to employers how they enforce social/physical distancing requirements on and off their sites. This sort of behaviour should be strongly discouraged. According to Provincial Health Guidance people who congregate in small groups do not need to self-isolate unless they meet other criteria.

13. What if workers are not disclosing information on their illness and medical conditions in fear of losing their jobs?

Employers should consider putting sick-leave policies in place so that employees feel more comfortable disclosing illness. For more information on job protection measures taken by the government of BC, please visit <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020LBR0012-000551>

14. Testing for persons who are symptomatic is not available. What do I do?

We hope that the provincial government will be able to accommodate all testing requests in the future. In the meantime, as long as people who are symptomatic self-isolate they will reduce the risk of transmission to others.

15. What if workers cannot be physically distanced?

If workers cannot be physically distanced then employers will need to curtail or reduce the pace of work.

16. Is the government saying that a site with 200 workers is, or can ever be a safe worksite?

The government has stated that there should be no more than 50 people in the same space in any circumstances.

17. Some of the crews that are sick car-pool, how is that to be regulated?

Anyone who is sick should not be permitted on site. Under current provincial guidance people who have worked with sick people or carpooled with them do not necessarily need to self-isolate, although it would be reasonable to expect that all workers within that vehicle have been exposed and need to be treated as presumptive. The workers methods of travel to and from work unless in company transportation cannot be controlled by the employer. We urge workers to err on the side of caution, and self isolate if they have been in contact with any individual known to show symptoms

18. Commercial cleaning products and masks are not available. What do I do?

If commercial cleaning products and masks that are required to complete the work safely are not available then you may need to curtail work. Government and industry are working to make more products and testing available