

December 15th, 2020

When Social Distancing is Not Possible

With the spread of COVID-19 across Canada it is crucial for everyone to take the proper measures to protect themselves and their families from exposure. The best way to accomplish this is to wash hands thoroughly and often, practice social distancing and self-isolation. In other words stay home.

This is not an option for many work places and workers throughout Saskatchewan. The provincial Government has released a list of businesses that are deemed critical to operate as well as businesses deemed allowable to operate. Employers that fall into either of these categories must implement procedures and controls to minimize the risk of exposure to their employees.

It is important to utilize the hierarchy of controls where possible to decrease the risk of exposure. For example:

- Elimination – If a worker or family member has been experiencing symptoms, **stay home**.
- Substitution – Using mechanical lifts to move materials rather than having a co-worker assist
- Engineering – Use of barriers like the ones many grocery stores are installing
- Administrative – Limiting of workers in areas such as lunch rooms, staggering breaks and shifts
- PPE – This can include gloves, face masks, face shields or special suits designed to limit exposure
 - **All work done indoors must follow the current mandatory mask guidelines.**
 - For more information on where masks must be work please see the Saskatchewan Health Authority Website under Indoor Mandatory Masking Requirements.

Inevitably, some tasks will require workers to work in close proximity to each other. For tasks that social distancing is not possible, consider the following points to limit the risk of exposure to the workers. All employees must be orientated to this procedure and all other Covid-19 exposure procedures.

1. First and foremost, inform all employees that if they are ill they should **STAY HOME!** This includes experiencing **any** symptoms no matter how minor these symptoms may seem.
2. Remind all employees to not touch their face, eyes, or mouth.
3. Have employees complete a Health Questionnaire at the beginning of the day.
http://www.scsaonline.ca/pdf/Health_Questionnaire_-_COVID_19.pdf
4. Ensure the worksite is equipped with adequate hand washing/sanitizing stations and post information on proper hand washing.
5. Ensure worksite is cleaned and sanitized regularly with particular focus on common touch points.
6. Restrict the sharing of tools on site. If tools must be shared, sanitize them in between uses.
7. Plan job tasks to limit the amount of time workers need to be closer together than 6 feet.
8. Develop a Safe Job Procedure for tasks that require workers to be closer together than 6 feet.
9. When workers need to work in close proximity to each other, they should wear appropriate PPE such as gloves, safety glasses, N95 facemask or P100 respirator
10. The workers need to distance themselves from their co-workers if they need to cough or sneeze. This should be done into their elbow or a tissue. Tissues should be disposed of immediately into a proper waste receptacle. The worker will need to thoroughly wash or sanitize their hands prior to resuming work.
11. When the task is complete, employees should thoroughly wash or sanitize their hands.
12. Disposable PPE such as gloves and facemasks should be disposed of properly in a waste receptacle. Reusable items such as safety glasses should be thoroughly washed.
13. Remember to again wash your hands!

If you develop symptoms – cough, fever or difficulty breathing – stay home and complete the [online COVID-19 self-assessment](#). Do not go to the ER or doctor's office.

For more information and resources: <http://www.scsaonline.ca/resources/covid-19-coronavirus>