

Regina & Region
Home Builders'
Association



Saskatoon & Region
Home Builders'
Association



SAFETY PROTOCOL MANUAL

COVID-19 Resource & Best Management Practices

What you need to know about health and safety on-site

March 24, 2020 >> This document has been adapted from a document produced by the Ontario Home Builders' Association (OHBA) and is approved for circulation by the Saskatoon & Region Home Builders' Association and the Regina & Region Home Builders' Association. Thank you to the OHBA for their work on this document – collaboration at its best.

Introduction

This document is a collection of resources, best practices and information links designed to help construction employers understand their rights and responsibilities while operating during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is not a legal document and all employers are advised to seek legal advice as part of their overall due diligence process.

Some businesses may already have rules and regulations in place, in which case this can be a supplement to your current protocols.

While the situation is changing daily, the legislation and regulations used to govern Saskatchewan's workplaces has not. Employers still have the duty to keep workers and work sites safe and free of hazards and workers still have the right to refuse unsafe work. Effective communication of new safety procedures and policies will help ensure positive outcomes.

In order to address COVID-19 concerns find below the following resources:

1. COVID-19 Government Announcements
 2. On-Site Best Practices
 3. Additional Safety Resources and Guides
 4. Other Resources
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1. COVID-19 Government Announcements

All levels of government are issuing announcements daily. To stay updated please use the following official links:

- City of Regina COVID-19 webpage
<https://www.regina.ca/home-property/safety-emergencies/emergency-preparedness/covid-19/>
- City of Saskatoon COVID-19 webpage
<https://www.saskatoon.ca/services-residents/fire-emergency/covid-19>
- Saskatchewan COVID-19 webpage including Health Updates
<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus>
- Canada COVID-19 webpage
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

2. On-Site Best Practices

The health and safety of workers is a top concern and increased focus on health and safety is required to keep job-sites open. Below are resources, tips, and best practices employers should follow during the COVID-19 situation:

- a) **Personal Hygiene:** Everyone can take individual steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Personal hygiene tips include:
 1. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
 2. Cough and sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and wash your hands afterwards
 3. Avoid commonly touched areas including handrails, public transit poles or ensure you clean your hands after
 4. Open doors and touch elevator buttons with gloves, the back of your hand, or other body part or activate the wheelchair accessibility button with the back of your hand, elbow or knee if possible
 5. Wash your clothes as soon as you get home
 6. Notify your supervisor immediately if you are sick and contact the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

- b) **Illness Reporting:** The symptoms of COVID-19 are shared with many other illnesses including the cold and flus. At this time, it is recommended that any worker who is experiencing any symptoms be sent home. In addition, employers should advise all workers experiencing symptoms to complete the self-assessment on the [Saskatchewan COVID-19 website](#) and follow instruction there or call 811. The Saskatchewan Health Authority is the leading authority for all issues related to COVID-19 and only they can provide detailed instructions to employees and employers. PLEASE NOTE additional resources, policies, and procedures are being developed to provide additional support in this area.

- c) **Communicate:** Communication is key, and a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities will be key. Everyone will need ensure health and safety policies are updated and posted for all employees to see. Use of industry resources including those produced by Saskatchewan WCB and the Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association (SCSA) will improve on-site understanding.

- d) **Policies:** All employers need to have COVID-19 policies that are posted and communicated with to all employees and contractors/trades. This includes how the site will operate including but not limited to the sanitization of sites, how employees and contractors report illnesses, how to ensure social distancing, and how work will be scheduled.

- e) **Social Distancing:** As outlined in several government announcements Social Distancing is required to control the spread of COVID-19. In order to ensure social distancing on site, Employers should consider the following:

1. Staggered start times
 2. Staggered breaks
 3. Staggered lunches
 4. Total number of people on-site and where they are assigned to work
 5. Site movement (where higher potential of workers gathering including personal and material hoists and site trailers)
- f) **On-site Sanitation:** As outlined in several government documents, on-site sanitation is paramount. All employers have an obligation to increase the sanitization of sites. Areas of focus should include:
1. Access to soap and water (ways to properly sanitize hands)
 2. Washroom facilities
 3. Commonly touched surfaces or areas (hoists / site-trailers / door handles/ equipment or residential units)
 4. Limit unnecessary on-site contact between workers and between workers and outside service providers and encourage physical distancing in these areas. (i.e.: remove coffee trucks from site)
- g) **Adjust On-Site and Production Schedules:** In order to keep sites open, production schedules will need to change as impacts of social distancing will impact productivity. Owners and trades will need to collaborate to ensure there is a clear understanding of how production will be impacted. Schedules should consider:
1. Need for social distancing including staggered work schedules
 2. Sanitation of Sites and workspaces
 3. Reduction of workers (i.e. do not schedule multiple crews in the same home)
 4. Work-site mobility and transportation including personal and material hoisting operations
- h) **Track and Monitor your workforce.** Due to the latency period of COVID-19, it is important to track when workers report an illness as well as where they have worked. In the case of a positive test, Saskatchewan Health Authority will ask employers to provide information on where an employee worked as well as the contact information of anyone who may have been exposed. The better employers track information, the better the Saskatchewan Health Authority can respond.

3. Additional Safety Resources and Guidelines

[Government of Saskatchewan](#) >> The leading authority for the most up-to-date resources and responses on COVID19, including:

- links to evolving public health guidelines, position statements, and situational updates
- synopsis of key articles updating on the latest findings related to the virus
- recommendations for use of personal protective equipment
- symptoms and treatments
- how to protect yourself and self-isolate
- updated news on the virus
- testing information
- other public resources

[Health Canada](#) >> Outlines the actions being taken by the Government of Canada, as well as what is happening in provinces and communities across the country related to the virus. It also maintains a live update of the number of confirmed cases and probable cases by province.

[World Health Organization](#) >> Is updating on the latest guidance and information related to the global outbreak and spread beyond Canadian borders. It also is providing the most up-to-date information on:

- current research and development around the virus
- a COVID19 situation “dashboard”
- emergency preparedness measures
- live media updates on the spread of the virus

[WCB](#) and [SCSA](#) >> Both are an excellent source of Health and Safety information and tools for employers.

4. Other Resources

There are a host of additional resources available to help address the ongoing COVID19 outbreak that are aimed at the construction and design industries. Resources include:

- The Canadian Construction Association’s online Pandemic Preparedness Guide
<https://www.cca-acc.com/covid-19-resources/>

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers online resource
<https://bit.ly/2UfRqI9>
 - The Harvard Business Review's Employer Preparedness Questions
<https://bit.ly/2x2OoGS>
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