



## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Best Practices Guideline – updated May 20, 2020**

The Waste Management Association of BC (WMABC) supports the actions by the Province of BC and the Canadian Government to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

As the waste & recycling sector had been deemed an essential service early on in the COVID-19 pandemic, the WMABC has been working with the Province and Regional Districts in their efforts to try to assist businesses and individuals as well as have been in close contact with WorkSafeBC to introduce parameters to the re-opening of businesses and we support these steps.

As the waste & recycling sector has continued to operate with new safety protocols in place for their employees and customers, the WMABC has developed these suggested best practices guidelines for industry to follow and implement into their safety protocol plans. These include but are not limited to the following:

### **Developing or Redesigning Your Safety Protocol Plan to include COVID-19 Precautions**

When reviewing your company **Safety Protocol Plan (SPP)**, please ensure you have addressed the risks associated with COVID-19 for your drivers, current office staff, returning office staff, vehicle maintenance staff, cleaning staff, yard workers, facility floor workers, scale operators and customers. Ensure your plans include safety protocols / processes, have addressed employee concerns, and provides for sick time off in the event of illness. **In accordance with the order of the [Provincial Health Officer](#) (May 19, 2020), this plan must be posted at the worksite**

### **The following are suggested measures to implement into your SPP**

- Assess the risk at your workplace. Consider the following areas of higher risk:
  - Where do people congregate, such as break rooms, production lines, or meeting rooms?
  - What job tasks or processes require workers to come into close proximity with one another or members of the public?
  - What materials that are exchanged, such as money, credit cards, and paperwork?
  - What tools, machinery, and equipment do people come into contact within the course of their work?
  - What surfaces are touched often, such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, light switches, equipment, and shared tools?
- Implement a company-wide, self distancing policy for all employees with a minimum 6 feet or 2 meters between individuals.
- Continue to provide opportunities for employees to work from home wherever possible.
- Increase routine cleaning procedures, particularly in areas of high employee traffic. Increase washroom cleaning throughout the day.
- Consider staggered start times for employees coming into the office, shop, facility or yard.
- Provide Sanitizer wipes / solution to be used in offices on telephones, computer keyboards, door handles and other common areas of use.
- Provide PPE where employees may have more interaction with others at less than 2 metre distance or when requested by employee
- Provide adequate hand-washing facilities on site for all employees.

- Develop the necessary policies to manage & address illness in the workplace. Provide flexible sick leave and supportive policies and practices. The provincial health officer and the BC CDC have issued the following guidance around self-isolation, which must be reflected in your policies:
  - anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, must self-isolate at home for a minimum of 10 days
  - anyone under the direction of the provincial health officer to self-isolate must follow those instructions
  - anyone who has arrived from outside of Canada, or who is a contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, to self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms
  - Will you have workers working alone to reduce the risk of transmission? If so, you need to have procedures for these workers to ensure they are safe.
  - If you will have employees working from home, you need to develop work from home procedures to ensure workers are working safely.
- Develop a communication plan and provide training. Delegate one person as key point person for COVID-19 related issues.
- Post signage, including occupancy limits and effective hygiene practices. Signage should also be posted at the main entrance indicating who is restricted from entering the premises (including visitors and workers with symptoms).
- Monitor your workplace and update your plans as needed.
- Reduce customer access to your business or office, where possible.
- Ensure your safety manager has the tools to efficiently & safely communicate with drivers, workers & others.
- Understand workers have the right to refuse work if they believe it presents an undue hazard.

### **Additional Suggested Measures for Drivers**

- Provide Sanitizer wipes to be used during and at end of day on truck steering wheels, inside handles, radio mics, seatbelt buckles & other common areas of use.
- For refuse truck drivers & their swappers, take all precautions daily and consider wearing a mask while in cab of vehicle together. Reduce amount of time spent together in cab of vehicle as best as possible.
- Consider a policy to ensure trucks are used by the same driver and/or swappers. No swaps.
- Provide PPE, such as puncture-resistant gloves and face and eye protection, to prevent worker exposure.

### **Employee Guidance for COVID-19**

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water (minimum 20 secs), don't touch your face, cover your cough or sneeze.
- Follow the Provincial Health Office guidelines to practice Physical Distancing (2 meters apart) whenever out in public space and/or in a shared office environment.
- Monitor yourself for symptoms, including cough, sneezing, fever, sore throat and difficulty breathing.
- Call the public health line at 8-1-1 if you have symptoms, particularly if you have recently travelled abroad or have been in contact with someone possibly affected.
- If you believe you have developed symptoms of COVID-19, notify your employer and contact 8-1-1 or use the BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool <https://covid19.thrive.health/>
- Stay home when you are sick.

### **Additional Waste Worker Guidance for COVID -19**

- Workers and employers should manage municipal (e.g., household, business) solid waste with potential or known COVID-19 contamination like any other non-contaminated municipal waste.
- Use typical engineering and administrative controls, safe work practices, and PPE, such as puncture-resistant gloves and face and eye protection, to prevent worker exposure.
- For medical waste with potential or known COVID-19 contamination, manage like any other regulated medical waste. COVID-19 is not a Category A infectious substance.

Your Safety Protocol Plan must be presented to WorkSafeBC in the event of an inspection and/or upon request.

This guidance is not intended to provide legal advice. Qualified legal advice should be obtained for how the law applies to any particular situation.

The following links may provide you with more information on COVID-19 & mitigating your risks

- [WorkSafeBC Returning to Safe Operations FAQ's](#)
- [WorkSafeBC Transportation & COVID-19 Safety](#)
- [Safety Driven Resources for Drivers, Shippers & Receivers](#)
- [Safety Driven – Transport Canada Tips for Masks, Cleaning & More](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control – Employers & Businesses](#)
- [US CDC – What Waste Collectors & Recyclers Need to Know](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)