



Notice to Regional Mine Managers regarding requirements during the COVID-19 Pandemic (May 25, 2020)

You are receiving this email as you are the appointed Mine Manager ([Mines Act section 21](#)) for a mine site with an active authorization to conduct mining activities.

We are in an extraordinary period in which British Columbia, Canada, and the world are responding to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources has developed an [information site](#) with current guidance on COVID-19, as it pertains to mines in British Columbia. In addition, the Public Health Officer has developed guidelines for [Protecting Workers, Contractors, and Employers Working in the Natural Resource Sector During the COVID](#). It is imperative that you adhere to current and evolving Provincial and Federal requirements and guidance on COVID-19-related matters.

These requirements will impact your responsibility to communities, how you operate your facilities, and how you interact with the public and communities along your access route. The requirements also have the potential to impact the timing of your proposed activities. These considerations are to be made in addition to your usual responsibilities to employees and contractors.

Planning your Work Activities:

- By [Order of the Provincial Health Officer](#) employers in the natural resource sector that utilize employer-provided industrial camps **must develop a COVID-19 infection prevention and control protocol** (the “Protocol”) to prevent and control the risk of transmission of COVID-19 virus among workers in their place of accommodation, at the worksite and when travelling to and from the worksite.
- Ensure you have adequate supplies when you leave your home community, and that there is a well-thought-out plan for additional provisioning (if needed) that avoids physical interactions with local communities.
- Some Indigenous communities have initiated specific measures for travel through their communities, including restricting access in some cases. You can request up to date information in this regard from the local Regional Mines Office.
- You are encouraged to use a local workforce wherever practical to reduce the need to bring in workers from other locations.
- Your plans (including start date) must be carefully considered and may need to be adjusted.

Prior to starting work (as soon as possible, but no later than 10 days before intended start date):

- “The manager shall give **10 days’** notice to an inspector of intention to start work in, at, or about a mine, including seasonal reactivation.” ([Health, Safety and Reclamation Code for Mines in BC](#) (HSRC, 2017) 6.2.1)
- You are requested to fill out the **Mines Screening Form** at ([MinesOperatorScreening](#)) – this is preferred for tracking purposes.
- or using the attached form, that confirms your compliance with the Provincial Health Officer Order and guidance.
- The Provincial Health Officer Order requires a site inspection to be arranged by an employer prior to work commencing on site. The screening form will assist Inspectors in prioritizing mine sites that are



ready to begin exploration and operations. **You may not commence work before this inspection has been completed.**

During all Work Activities:

- Follow your Protocol**
- Your Protocol must be visibly posted both at the worksite and in the provided accommodations. Your Protocol must be available to be presented to an Inspector of Mines upon request.
- For those sites that are operating without accommodation for employees, the site must still meet requirements as articulated on May 14, 2020, by the Provincial Health Officer under the Workplace Order.** This includes developing a plan for the measures you will implement and maintain over the coming 12-18 months thinking through the areas that will become the “new normal” in terms of formal and required actions that are the basis for workplaces and commercial businesses being in operation until the PHO lifts the public emergency requirements. Plans must be visibly posted on the worksite, on your website if you have one, and available to be presented to an Inspector of Mines upon request.

To ensure compliance with the above noted requirements, please submit the information below to the following mailbox: MCAD.RegionalOps@gov.bc.ca.

1. The Notice of Start of Operations; with reference to your approved *Mines Act* permit number and mine number
2. If accommodations are provided:
 - a. Confirm your completion of the Mines Screening Form online, or
 - b. attach the Mines Screening Form in your response

You are strongly encouraged to contact the Indigenous Nations in the area of your project to discuss your plans, provide a copy of your Protocol, and understand any COVID response directives and community plans. EMPR will provide a copy of your Protocol where requested by an Indigenous Nation, along with relevant contact information for further follow up if required.

If you cannot meet all the Provincial Health Officer COVID related Orders and guidelines, are unable to follow the guidance, or are unable to demonstrate an ability to mine safely - DO NOT conduct mining activities.

Regards,

Heather Cullen

A/Executive Director

Regional Operations Branch

Ministry of Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources