Message from the Office of the Chief Inspector of Mines
2020-03-18

COVID-19

Objective:

Ensure BC Mine awareness to public health requirements related to COVID-19.

Background:

The Provincial Health Officer is taking ongoing action including issuance of Orders pursuant to the Public Health Act, S.B.C 2008, in relation to the communicable disease known as COVID-19.

A public health order prohibiting gatherings in excess of 50 people has been issued. Relevant information related to COVID-19 may be located here: http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19

Statement of the Chief Inspector of Mines

Mines in British Columbia are required to follow orders issued by the Provincial Health Officer. Many mines across the province employ more than 50 people. The following recommendations apply in terms of day-to-day production and site operations:

- Reduce the number of on-site personnel by encouraging work from home where feasible.
- In person Townhall meetings used to address the whole site must to be avoided for groups with more than 50 people. Communication should continue in smaller groups or via any other media.
- Daily pre-shift safety meetings (toolbox meetings) affecting more than 50 people are to be held in smaller numbers or via other media.
- Reduce in person meeting and other gatherings where possible.

Although bunkhouses and cafeterias are regulated by WorkSafeBC and regional health authorities, the following measures are recommended:

- Limit the number of people to less than 50 at any given time.
- Establish multiple sittings in cafeterias to minimise numbers.

Implement other best practices consistent with Public Health Authority advice such as:

- Implement social distancing practices.
- Self-isolation for employees who traveled outside of Canada upon their return.
- Requiring employees showing symptoms to stay at home.
• Transportation to and from mines should be managed in ways that afford protection and minimise the risk of exposure for workers.
• Establish increased spacing between personnel where meetings are unavoidable (total to remain below 50 people).

Thank you for your cooperation and efforts to fight against the spread of COVID-19 and to minimize the effect thereof.

Hermanus Henning
Chief Inspector of Mines

George Warnock
Executive Lead: Authorizations