



COVID-19 Best Practices - Revised

Concrete Ontario's Health & Safety Committee has been working diligently to implement and improve our COVID-19 best practices documents. As the situation continues to evolve, the committee has identified additional government requirements and safety protocols that members can use to ensure compliance and address safety in the ready mixed concrete industry. This document is an update to the original SafetyMatters bulletin issued on March 24, 2020 and the revised version released on November 19, 2020.

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace, employers should:

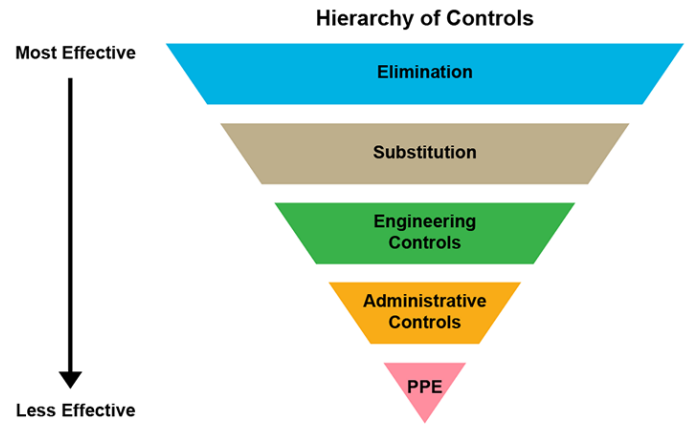
- screen all employees and customers entering the workplace (see the Active Screening Requirements section below)
- advise any employees with symptoms and/or workers who have come in contact with confirmed COVID-19 cases to self-isolate
- ensure people maintain a physical distance of two or more metres at all times
- make sure all workers, clients and visitors wear appropriate masks indoors and outdoors where physical distancing can't be maintained, securely covering their nose, mouth, and chin
- regularly disinfect high touchpoint surfaces and objects
- support hand hygiene, particularly handwashing and by providing hand sanitizer
- remind workers about good cough and sneeze etiquette and to avoid touching their face
- be familiar with Public Health requirements and work with your [local public health unit](#) as needed

Controlling COVID-19 Risks in the Workplace

- Control measures are steps that must be taken to reduce the risk for employees and can help break the chain of transmission of the COVID-19 virus. See the government of Ontario's [Develop your COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan](#).
- Employers should implement a variety of measures to control potential exposure to COVID-19. Examples include:
 - Daily screenings
 - Installing physical distancing reminders and barriers
 - Good ventilation
 - Frequent cleaning and disinfection of surfaces
 - Source control masking
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Use the hierarchy of controls (image below) and choose the right controls for your workplace. This applies to all workplace hazards, not just COVID-19.

Start by considering the most effective controls first. First, try to eliminate the hazard altogether. Where eliminating the hazard is not possible, use multiple engineering and administrative controls.

The higher the control appears in the diagram and the earlier it is in the list, the more effective it is. The first three types of controls are more effective because once in place they do not usually require additional action by a worker. The effective use of administrative controls and PPE requires workers and other people to implement them properly and consistently every time.



Active Screening Requirements

- As of September 26, 2020, employers were required to actively screen every worker on a daily basis before they enter the workplace. Recommended screening question can be found in the [COVID-19 Screening Tool for Businesses and Organizations](#) and **have been updated to include a start and end time, as well as language that confirms if the employee or anyone in their household has travelled outside of Canada or is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.**
- Active screening may be done in person at the workplace or remotely using telephone, online data forms, email submission or an app prior to entry, records should be maintained.
- The [COVID-19 screening tool for workplaces](#) can be used as an online tool, provided that screening records are retained, and all government screening recommendations are satisfied.
- A screener should advise anyone who does not pass the screening:
 - that they may not enter the workplace, including any outdoor, or partially outdoor, workplaces
 - to go home and self-isolate immediately
 - to contact their health care provider or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) to find out if they need a COVID-19 test and for further instructions
- Make sure screeners receive information and instruction on how to perform this work safely and what to do if a person must be excluded from the workplace.

Masks in the Workplace

- A mask is a piece of equipment that covers the wearer's nose, mouth and chin.
- For COVID-19, masks can be used in two ways in the workplace:
 - As a source control, workers and visitors wear the mask to protect those around them. The mask is controlling the hazard at its source – the wearer
 - As PPE: workers wear the mask, along with eye protection, to protect themselves
- Masks help reduce the risk in situations where other controls, particularly physical distancing, cannot be maintained. However, masks should not be the only control measure or replace other control measures in your workplace. For additional information and for local public health mask requirements reference the government of Ontario's link [Using Masks in the Workplace](#).

In regard to our industry, the Concrete Ontario Safety Committee offers the following:

General Hygiene

- Keep a safe distance of no less than 2 m (6 ft) when interacting with others.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth to prevent the spread of germs.
- If coughing, use a tissue or the corner of a sleeve to reduce the risk of spread, immediately wash hands for 20 seconds or use a commercial disinfectant such as Purell.
- Common or shared touch surfaces must be disinfected between uses and whenever first used.
- Wash your hands frequently, before and after eating or before touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Report/Call your supervisor if you have any of the following symptoms:
 - Cough
 - Fever (temperature above 38°C or 100F)
 - Shortness of Breath
- Report to your supervisor if you are returning from international destinations (outside Canada).
- Report to your supervisor if you have high susceptibility to additional complications if infected with Covid-19 (eg. reduced lung function, heart issues).
- Immediately report to your supervisor if you or a member of your household has been medically identified with Covid-19 or if you have come into contact with a confirmed case and remove yourself from the immediate workplace.



WASH

Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds



COVER

Cough or sneeze into a tissue, your sleeve or elbow



AVOID

Avoid touching your face, particularly eyes, mouth and nose



DISTANCE

Maintain a physical distance of at least 2m



ISOLATE

Stay home if you feel ill to stop the spread of COVID-19

Offices and Administration:

- Consider allowing non-essential administration employees who can work from home to do so.
- For employees who are required to work from an office, Government of Canada social distancing rules will apply, including:
 - Maintain a distance of no less than 2 m (6 ft) at all times
 - Disinfect all workspaces daily and between shifts
 - Increase spacing between workstations where possible
 - Relocate employees to spare offices to increase distance when possible.

Sales Teams:

- Sales employees should avoid unnecessary customer site visits.
- Contact with customers should be maintained via phone calls and video conferencing where appropriate.
- Any upcoming planned customer events should be reviewed and rescheduled in accordance with your company's policies and following the government recommendations regarding social distancing and safe practices protocols.

General Concrete Plant Operations:

- No visitors should be allowed access to the concrete plant without prior approval by management and then, **only for essential activities.**

- Ensure you wash your hands and anything you touch often with soap and water or sanitizer.
- Site support employees such as loader operators, mechanics and yard staff should be required to work in specifically identified safe work areas maintaining a distance of at least 2 m (6ft) with other workers.
- At the beginning and end of each shift use a disinfectant cleaner or soap and water to clean the steering wheel of the truck (or loader) you are operating and all switches, knobs, handles (inside and out), keys and mixer remotes, etc.
- Sharing of ready mixed trucks should be discontinued between drivers wherever possible to reduce the potential for cross contamination.
- Between loads and downtime please continue to work on your truck or other trucks in the fleet or yard duties – do this work outside when weather permits – work by yourself when at all possible and keep a safe distance from other workers.
- When you need to work near another employee please make sure that you distance yourself as far as possible from them and avoid physical contact.
- Do not enter the batch office unless absolutely necessary, if you need to go in keep a safe distance from other employees and keep the visit as short as possible.
- If you are having lunch it is suggested that you eat in your truck for best isolation from others – if you need to use the fridge, microwave, etc., please do so and return to your truck or a safe area.
- If you can not eat in your truck and you have to eat in a common area, respect physical distancing and maintain a 2m distance from other employees.

Batchers:

- Minimize the number of people that are in the batching office.
- Leave keys for raw material lockout systems outside of the batch office or at a sufficient distance from the batcher.
- Communicate with other employees via radio or cell phone as much as possible.
- If you have electronic ticketing options, consider expanding their use.
- For paper ticketing systems, minimize the contact with the material as much as possible and implement standard safety protocols. Ticket tubes should be sanitized between each use and you should reprint tickets if you feel contamination may have occurred.
- Ensure all other employees maintain a minimum safe working distance from you and utilize all company supplied protective equipment.
- Implement frequent hand washing and the cleaning of high touch-point/contamination surfaces.
- Make allowance for raw materials delivery tickets to be left outside the batch office in a designated area to mitigate contact with raw material suppliers.

Loader Operators:

- Stay in the equipment as much as possible to maintain safe working distances from employees.
- Utilize all company supplied protective equipment.
- Implement frequent hand washing and the cleaning of high contamination surfaces.
- Do not allow others to touch or utilize your equipment.
- Where job tasks require assistance, maintain safe working distances from other employees.

Raw Material Deliveries:

- Follow standard plant procedures for confirming that the correct materials are being unloaded into the correct storage area.
- Maintain safe distances from all concrete plant personnel.
- Ensure that the only person that touches your delivery equipment is you to minimize the potential for cross-contamination.
- Wipe down high contact surfaces both before unloading and after unloading.

Drivers:

- Utilize the protective equipment your company has provided you.
- Wherever possible the practice of sharing concrete trucks should be avoided to minimize the potential for cross-contamination. If this is not feasible, the operator leaving the vehicle must disinfect all surfaces prior to leaving and the new operator should repeat this decontamination procedure before using the vehicle.
- While waiting to deliver your load, remain in the cab of the truck to minimize the potential for exposure.
- Minimize your exposure to other employees and contractors as much as possible and maintain safe working distances of 2 metres when around others.
- Do not allow others to directly touch your truck. You should be the only person operating the controls, adding or removing chutes, and using the water system.
- If you have electronic ticketing systems, do not allow contractors to “sign” for deliveries. Instead, just note their names on the form once you have received authorization for the load.
- Encourage all customers to accept electronic ticketing wherever possible to minimize the need for the transfer of paper materials that may be contaminated.
- Eliminate the touching of the concrete chutes by contractors wherever practical (examples include delivering to concrete pumps and wheelbarrows). Where contractor contact can not be avoided, follow your company specific policy. Concrete Ontario recommends, requiring the contractor to wear gloves at all times, minimizing the points of contact as much as possible and decontaminating any surfaces the contractor has touched with a disinfectant cleaner, soap and water or any other company approved product, prior to storing the chutes back on the truck.
- Drivers will maintain a safe working distance of no less than 2 m (6ft), from any site personnel.
- Site personnel are not to assist in the off loading of concrete.
- Pump operators are required to maintain a distance of no less than 2 m (6ft).
- Drivers should not enter any customer facility unless instructed by a responsible site employee, and then, only if respecting physical distancing rules.
- When the contractor requires water for the cleaning of their tools at the end of the day, ask them to lay them out on the ground and wash them directly yourself without touching the tools directly. Note: cleaning this equipment is not your responsibility but customer service requires that we assist where possible
- When the testing company requires water for the cleaning of their equipment ask them to lay the equipment down on the ground and wash them directly yourself without touching the equipment. Note: cleaning this equipment is not your responsibility but customer service requires that we assist where possible
- At the end of the day conduct a complete cleaning of your truck, removing all garbage and wiping down all high contact surfaces.

Equipment Service and Maintenance Operations:

- Employees should interact with mechanics and maintenance people primarily via phone or radio to reduce the potential for contamination.
- When dropping equipment/vehicles off for servicing, the interior of the equipment and all high contact areas should be decontaminated following the standard procedures used at the start and end of each shift.
- Once the equipment/vehicle is placed back in service the driver should again complete the interior decontamination as outlined by company procedures.

Technical Services Employees:

- Maintain safe working distance of 2m (6ft) from the driver when obtaining concrete samples.
- Do not touch the concrete truck controls or water hose. The driver should be the only person touching the controls of the truck to avoid potential surface contamination.
- If you require water for washing your concrete testing equipment, place the materials on the ground near the truck and ask the driver to wash the equipment without directly touching it.
- Your testing equipment should only be touched by yourself and should not be shared with any other workers.
- Please ask all other jobsite personnel to stay a minimum 2m distance from you while you are performing

your test.

- Verbally request the appropriate information that you require on the delivery ticket from the driver in order to create your own concrete testing log.
- Once you have determined your test results, please communicate these results verbally to the driver and the contractor while maintaining safe working distances.

Inter-Plant Concrete Shipping:

- Where possible the equipment and drivers should be based at individual plant locations to minimize the potential for spreading contaminants from one location to another. However, due to the volume and supply rate requirements of customers this may not always be possible.
- When inter-plant shipping is required, utilize the minimum number of drivers required to complete the delivery.
- When loading concrete from a secondary plant that contains a wash rack, consider having a dedicated employee at that concrete plant adjust all loads from external trucks so that the driver doesn't need to leave the cab of their truck.

Additional Resources

As restrictions are lifted and regions are being phased back into the colour coded zones of the COVID-19 response framework, many new and updated Occupational Health and Safety resources have been added. Please review the COVID-19 information resources below.

- [Government of Ontario](#) – updates regarding the number of cases in Ontario, as well as tools and information on how to protect yourself from COVID-19.
- [Public Health Ontario](#) – resources including fact sheets, guidance, and best practices, as well as testing information in Ontario.
- [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#) – guidance for businesses and employers, as well as [print materials](#).
- [Government of Canada](#) – employer responsibilities and employee rights information including EI and leave options.



- Infection Prevention and Control at Work: Basic Awareness Training is now available through the Public Services Health and Safety Association in both [English](#) and [French](#).
 - This free 30 minute eLearning program will equip workers in all types of workplace with information about how infections are spread, and what actions workers can take to protect themselves and others from infectious hazards that may exist in their workplace.
- The Government of Ontario's guide to [Developing your COVID-19 workplace safety plan](#) has been updated to reflect some regulatory changes under the Reopening Ontario Act, to link to the new screening tool for workers, and to provide some additional information related to self-isolation and return to work.
- These documents are accompanied by a new [COVID-19 safety checklist](#). In addition, the Ontario.ca website also provides:
 - [Using masks in the workplace](#)
 - Workplace posters: [Your break is not a break from COVID-19 Safety](#), [Keep it to yourself during COVID](#), and [COVID should not be on the menu at lunch](#).
 - Guidance for employers to support the Stay Safe All Day campaign which focuses on workplace inspections in areas of high transmission such as break rooms [Meal and break periods at work during COVID-19](#).
- Free webinars on how to develop a safety plan, along with sample safety plans can be found through [Workplace Safety and Prevention Services](#).
- [Construction health and safety during COVID-19](#) provides updated COVID-19 guidance specific to the

construction sector.

- [COVID-19: self-isolation and return to work](#) provides guidance for employers in developing their self-isolation and return to work policies.

Reviewing the following items should be considered:

- **Reassessing your Fit for Duty Policy** – make sure your policy is clear that if employees are not feeling well and/or experiencing any symptoms, they should not come into work.
- **Developing/updating your COVID-19 safety plan** – use the government and CDC resources to ensure best practices are followed and actions are communicated to employees.
- Reminding all employees of the need to **self-isolate for 14 days when returning from international destinations.**
- Providing all employees with updated information and advice on how to best protect themselves, both at work and at home. Minimize close contact and promote good hygiene.
- Assuring your staff that you are following government and authority recommendations and are continuing to monitor the situation for updates.

Concrete Ontario Health & Safety Committee

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