



Chris Atchison, President
British Columbia Construction Association
655 Tyee Road, Suite 401
Victoria BC V9A 6X5

Reference: 292861

Dear Chris Atchison:

Re: B.C. Construction Projects

I am writing to let members of B.C.'s construction and roadbuilding industry know that within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure plans to continue to advance both existing and new highway construction and engineering within the province.

Public health and worker safety are the top priorities for the B.C. Government. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is taking and will continue to take advice and direction from the Ministry of Health, the Provincial Health Officer and public health experts.

To that end I would also like to draw your attention to the accompanying document developed by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, *Guidance to construction sites operating during COVID-19*

On March 16, 2020, Dr. Bonnie Henry issued an order under the BC's *Public Health Act* prohibiting the gathering of people in excess of 50 people at a place of which you are the owner, occupier or operator, or for which you are otherwise responsible.

While this order does not apply to construction projects and industrial sites as a whole, Dr. Henry is directing employers to take all necessary precautions to minimize the risks of COVID-19 transmission and illness to you and your employees. There are a number of practical health and safety measures that employers can take to achieve this goal.

These include but are not limited to: reducing the number of in-person meetings and other gatherings, and where possible holding site meetings outdoors; ensuring that workers are appropriately distanced, both in the course of their duties as well as during breaks; cleaning all common areas and shared surfaces at the end of each day.

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Anyone who develops COVID-19 like symptoms such as sore throat, fever, sneezing, or coughing should leave the construction or industrial site and self-isolate at home for 14 days.

Information for construction employers is readily available. WorkSafeBC and the BC Construction Safety Alliance have recently published guides for safe work practices for COVID -19 in the construction industry, which can be reviewed online by visiting:

www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/news-events/announcements/2020/March/covid-19-and-the-workplace

The B.C. roadbuilding industry has also issued many bulletins addressing best work practices for COVID-19 and roadbuilding construction.

The ministry expects construction contractors to adopt work protocols that reflect evolving, current best practices. We know many new highway construction work practices are being incorporated every day, following Dr. Henry's recommendations frequent hand washing, social distancing and self-monitoring. In addition contractors are sanitizing vehicles and machines before and after shifts, conducting dispatch by text message, rotating shifts and taking work breaks away from lunch rooms.

In this current environment, the ministry is committed to continue to work collaboratively and cooperatively with your contractors while incorporating the best COVID-19 hygiene and health practices in this dynamic and changing circumstance. Our focus is on ensuring a common-sense approach to taking measures to protect the health of our workers and the public, to advance projects in a safe manner and to continue this important work for the provincial transportation network and social and economic health of the province.

The ministry has every confidence the roadbuilding and transportation industry is resilient, and we will work together to continue with vital highway and transportation projects during this challenging period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Richter', written in a cursive style.

Kevin Richter
Associate Deputy Minister