



COVID-19 Exposure Control Protocol

Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council

PREPARED BY: CLARE GREENBERG

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1. Introduction

Scope & Purpose:

- B.C. is currently in a Provincial State of Emergency, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All orders from the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) must be followed:
 - These orders are updated regularly and may change from time to time. Please consult the current orders in place here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>
- Vegetation Management has been listed by the BC government as an [essential service](#), however this does not cover the breadth of SSISC's work.
- In order to comply with regulations and recommendations set out by the PHO, and others, we are required to develop and adopt a protocol for minimising the risk of exposure to, and transmission of COVID-19, for our staff and contractors.
- This document lays out:
 - the general principles that staff and contractors should adopt to minimize the chance of exposure to COVID-19 at work,
 - the situations where staff and contractors should not work, and
 - specific protocols that staff and contractors should follow to ensure that physical distancing and proper sanitation are achieved.
- We require that all board members, employees and contractors that work for SSISC follow the COVID-19 protocols set out in this document.
- As this is a changing situation, this document will be updated as new information is provided.

Note: this document borrows heavily from various templates and examples provided by other organisations including the Fraser Valley Invasive Species Society, the Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society, the BCCF, The BC Construction Safety Alliance, the BCLNA and Heike Design Landscaping. Thanks for sharing!

2. COVID-19 General Information

Only follow advice from reliable sources. Here are some examples:

- <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19>
- <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>
- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>

Information about [how the virus spreads](#):

- COVID-19 spreads from an infected person to others through respiratory droplets and aerosols created when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, shouts, or talks. The droplets vary in size

from large droplets that fall to the ground rapidly (within seconds or minutes) near the infected person, to smaller droplets, sometimes called aerosols, which linger in the air under some circumstances.

- The relative infectiousness of droplets of different sizes is not clear. Infectious droplets or aerosols may come into direct contact with the mucous membranes of another person's nose, mouth or eyes, or they may be inhaled into their nose, mouth, airways and lungs. The virus may also spread when a person touches another person (i.e., a handshake) or a surface or an object (also referred to as a fomite) that has the virus on it, and then touches their mouth, nose or eyes with unwashed hands.

COVID-19 [symptoms](#) can vary from person to person. Some of the more commonly reported symptoms include:

- new or worsening cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- temperature equal to or over 38°C
- feeling feverish
- chills
- fatigue or weakness
- muscle or body aches
- new loss of smell or taste
- headache
- gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting)
- feeling very unwell

Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19. The virus can be spread to others from someone who's infected but not showing symptoms. The virus can be spread to others from someone who's infected but not showing symptoms. This includes people who are pre-symptomatic (haven't yet developed symptoms), and asymptomatic (never develop symptoms).

Use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to help determine if you need further assessment or testing for COVID-19, or call your health care provider or 8-1-1 to discuss any need for testing and follow up.

If you feel sick, follow the [BC CDC Guidelines](#), and **do not come to work**.

Notify Clare (ED) immediately if you have symptoms and/or test positive, or if anyone you live with, or have recently been in personal contact with, tests positive for COVID-19.

3. Risk Assessment

Risk Identification

Three primary routes of transmission are anticipated for COVID-19:

- ***Breathing droplets and aerosols in the air***

Anybody who is near an infected individual may risk breathing in droplets or aerosols created when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, shouts, or talks.

- **Close contact with another person**

Close contact refers to physical contact with another person, for example shaking hands or hugging. When people cough or sneeze droplets may deposit on their skin or clothing, especially if they cough or sneeze into their hands. People who are carriers of COVID-19 may transfer the virus from their hands or clothing to others during close contact.

- **Surface Contact**

Surfaces can become contaminated when droplets carrying COVID-19 deposit on them, or when they are touched by a person who is infected. Surface contact involves a worker touching a contaminated object such as a table, doorknob, telephone, or computer keyboard or tool, and then touching the eyes, nose, or mouth. Surface contact is important to consider because COVID-19 can persist for several days on surfaces.

Risk assessment

SSISC Operations are considered low or moderate risk, as follows. The mitigation of these risks is to follow the general approach outlined below, and the work protocols in section 4.

Role / Type of Work	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
	No contact with infected persons	May have contact with infected people from time to time in outdoor workspaces	May be exposed to infected people in small, poorly ventilated workspaces
Executive Director – office work (from home)	X		
Education & Outreach Team – office work (from home)	X		
Field Team – Surveys, Control & Monitoring		X	
Field Team – office work (from home)	X		
Contractors – Surveys, Control & Monitoring		X	
Board of Directors – communications and attendance of virtual meetings	X		

4. General Principles

General Approach:

The health and safety of SSIC staff, contractors, partners, and members of the communities within which we work, is of utmost importance to SSISC. All staff and contractors must work to minimize the risk of infection or transmission, whilst at work, but also when not at work. This includes:

- Avoiding closed spaces, crowded places, close contact settings and close-range conversation or settings where there is singing, shouting, or heavy breathing (for example, during exercise).
- Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering when you're in:
 - public and you might come into close contact with others
 - shared indoor spaces with people from outside your immediate household
- Staying home and away from others if you feel sick
- Keeping the number of people you have prolonged contact with as small as possible
- Sticking to a small and consistent social circle and avoid gathering in large groups
- [Washing your hands](#) regularly and thoroughly, with soap and water or hand sanitizer
- Using [physical distancing](#) to minimise close contact with others: keep a 2m (approximately 6ft) distance between yourself and others
- Following the same procedures that are recommended during cold and flu season
- Covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Avoiding touching your face
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces

Affected work:

In a normal year, SSISC staff and contractors would usually share workspaces, vehicles and equipment. SSISC staff and contractors would usually also interact in-person with colleagues, members of the community, funding partners, landowners, partner organisations, and government staff. These components of our work will need to be amended to ensure that we are complying with this protocol.

The SSISC acknowledges and understands that staff and contractor efficiency and work output will likely be less than normal this year. We are thankful that our funding partners also acknowledge that a lower work output will be likely this year (e.g. fewer sites will be surveyed and treated), due to the increased cost, in terms of labour and expenses, required to comply with this protocol.

Other jurisdictions:

The SSISC will submit this protocol to all land managers that we plan to work with in 2020. Land managers and funders are asked to communicate the details of any relevant internal policies or guidelines that apply to their lands or infrastructure, that may affect the ability of SSISC staff and contractors to abide by the protocols outlined in this document.

5. Work Protocols

- **Anyone with symptoms or feeling ill should not work**
 - Staff will have access to each other's detailed workplans and site lists in Asana and in the SSISC ArcGIS Online Schedule, so that workplans can be re-assigned to other staff or contractors if anyone falls ill, and cannot work.
 - Any staff or contractors that begin to feel ill, have symptoms, or come into contact with someone with symptoms, should go home immediately and contact Clare.
- **Staff and contractors should work from home whenever possible**

- Staff will be provided with the equipment and tools they need to carry out work from home
- If working from home is not possible (e.g. field work), then the relevant protocols listed below should be followed to minimise the risk of infection or transmission.
- **NEW Temporary measure (initiated Nov 12th, 2020):** All staff are to work from home until further notice, unless you have permission from the Executive Director to visit the SSISC office, or other work location, outside of your home. If given permission, please follow these procedures:
 - Staff must 'book in' when they plan to work from (including the SSISC office) via the shared SSISC Google calendars. Clare will monitor the calendars and advise staff if plans need changing.
 - SSISC staff must log any visits to the SSISC office using the shared 'SSISC Office check-in' spreadsheet saved on Dropbox here: [Dropbox \(SSISC\)\Admin - SSISC\Occupational Health and Safety\COVID19](#)
 - If going 'to work' at any location outside of your home office, SSISC staff must complete the [BC COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool](#) and ensure they are not showing any symptoms (e.g. high temperature, coughing, difficulty breathing etc.) each day, before leaving home. It is expected that staff will measure their temperature, at the time of the assessment, in order to be able to answer the questions properly.
- **Limit the number of people working from the SSISC Office at the same time**
 - If working from the SSISC office is necessary, staff must maintain 2m physical distance from others at all times.
 - A maximum of 6 SSISC staff can work from the office at the same time.
- **Limit the number of people accessing SSISC's storage locations (basement at SSISC office, and locker at MFLNRORD office in Squamish)**
 - A limit of 1 person at a time will be applied to both storage locations.
 - Heavy equipment & lifting
 - We have purchased a carrying sling for the kayak, so that 1 person can lift and carry the kayak, which usually requires 2 people.
 - Access to the MFLNRORD locker will follow the safety protocol set out by MFLNRORD staff.
 - Please refer to the 'MFLNRO COVID-19 Locker Procedures.doc' file saved here: [Dropbox \(SSISC\)\Admin - SSISC\Occupational Health and Safety\COVID19](#)
- **In-person meetings should be avoided where possible**
 - All staff meetings, meetings of the board, and meetings with partners should be done virtually (over Zoom Video call, or other software), or as a conference call, or a phone call.
 - If in-person meetings are essential (e.g. between field crew members), they should be done whilst maintaining 2m physical distance between participants, outside if possible, or in a well-ventilated indoor area.
- **Events and gatherings should be cancelled or postponed**
 - Outreach & Education events, workshops, training and any other in-person education events should be postponed, cancelled, or moved to an online format where possible.

- **Field work (surveys and treatments) on private, residential properties should be postponed**
 - Site visits to residential properties should be postponed where staff members cannot maintain 2m physical distance from residents, or if staff members need to gain entry to a dwelling to access the site.
- **Field work (surveys and treatments) in busy public areas may need to be postponed, or carried out when fewer people are present**
 - E.g. parks and trails
 - High-traffic areas will not be visited this spring (e.g. open parks and busy trails). If possible they will be visited later in the season, or not at all this season.
 - In lower traffic areas, field work will be carried out during non-peak hours (e.g. early morning) in order to maintain physical distance from others.
- **Limit 1 person per vehicle, wherever possible**
 - Except staff who share the same household
 - SSISC Field trucks will be assigned to a staff person, and cleaned thoroughly at the start and end of each work day (see Vehicle cleaning procedure below).
 - Staff and contractors may be asked to use personal vehicles to drive to work locations. Mileage and an insurance allowance will be paid as per the SSISC Mileage policy.
 - Where the one person limit is not possible, two people may travel in one vehicle, as long as:
 - they are seated as far apart as possible (e.g. driver + back right side);
 - vents are open to promote air circulation in the vehicle;
 - both employees/people are comfortable with this arrangement
 - both must wear masks (medical-grade masks are not required, washable masks are sufficient), and
 - pre-entry hand washing is completed whenever you leave and return to the vehicle throughout the day.
- **Workspaces should be kept clean**
 - Surfaces and equipment touched often (e.g. desks, keyboards, telephones, door handles), at the SSISC office, and at home workspaces, will be wiped and disinfected frequently.
- **Handwashing stations / equipment should be present at all work locations**
 - At the SSISC office – soap and towels will be provided for hand washing in the washroom and kitchen
 - Vehicles – all vehicles used for SSISC business will be equipped with a hand-washing kit (see kit list below). This includes SSISC leased vehicles, personal vehicles used for SSISC business, and contractor vehicles (contractors are expected to supply their own kit).
 - At home – staff working from home should wash hands regularly using soap and water.
- **Avoid using communal kitchen facilities at the SSISC office (e.g. the coffee maker, kettle, fridge, microwave, cutlery and plates)**
 - Staff will bring their own food, drinks and kitchen supplies from home
 - Sharing of food between staff is prohibited except for members of the same household
- **Anything touched in the washroom and shower at the SSISC office is to be wiped down**
 - Paper towels and disinfectant spray will be available
- **All staff members and contractors should have their own personal protective equipment (PPE)**

- Additional PPE will be purchased at the start of the season to make sure everyone has their own (e.g. gloves, eye protection, coveralls, respirator, hardhat etc.)
- PPE will be sanitised prior to being provided to staff (See Equipment cleaning protocol below)
- PPE will be clearly labelled with the staff member's name and/or coloured flagging tape, and kept with the staff member in the vehicle they are travelling in that day.
- PPE should not be shared between staff.
- **Tools and equipment should be sanitised between different users**
 - If possible, tools & equipment will be assigned to a specific person at the beginning of the season and will only be used by that staff member.
 - For equipment that is shared, equipment and tools will be sanitised between different users (see Equipment cleaning protocol below)
- **If you have concerns about yourself or others potentially being exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace, contact Clare immediately.**

SSISC staff, board members and contractors are expected to comply with physical distancing and other preventative measures, as much as possible, outside of work, as well as when working, to limit the risk of potentially exposing fellow workers to COVID-19.

4.1. Staff Training

Every staff member was required to read this Exposure Control Plan at the start of their contract, and sign-off on it. Reminders will also be issued throughout the season at staff meetings and Monday morning briefings as necessary.

4.2. Handwashing Kits

Each vehicle will be equipped with the following handwashing/sanitisation kits

- Water jug
- Soap
- Paper towels
- Gloves
- Face mask
- Disinfecting wipes or spray
- Hand sanitizer

4.3. Equipment Cleaning Protocol

All equipment (e.g. backpack sprayers, stem injectors, mattocks, loppers) is to be cleaned and disinfected at the beginning and end of each workday and when transferring to a different user. When possible, equipment should be cleaned with isopropyl alcohol-based cleaner (at least 70%) or disinfecting wipes located in the Handwashing Kit.

Cleaning should focus on parts of the equipment frequently touched, such as handles and straps, as well as any creases.

4.4. Vehicle Cleaning Protocol

Drivers are responsible to ensure vehicles are disinfected prior to and immediately after use, ensuring that all garbage is removed and properly disposed of prior to cleaning even if the vehicle is assigned to them.

Drivers shall clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the vehicles, including:

Check list	✓
Steering wheel and controls	
Wiper and turn signal switches	
Shifter and emergency brake handle	
Dash controls and buttons	
Rear-view mirror	
Radio control buttons	
Door handles (inside and out)	
Window buttons	
Seatbelt buckles	
Arm rests	
Grab handles, seat adjusters	
Ventilation grilles and knobs	

The above checklist will be printed out and placed on the passenger’s seat (in a clipboard), and shall be filled out each time the vehicle is sanitized.

Do not use any type of bleach, hydrogen peroxide or ammonia-based (found in most ‘blue glass cleaners’) products on the vehicle’s interior, as they can cause damage to the vinyl on the dashboard and seat coverings, and damages anti-glare coatings on touch display screens.

Helpful and informative video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUwWo8AqSIQ>.

4.5. Documentation

Per the general principles outlined at the beginning of Section 4, all staff are instructed to contact the Executive Director if they experience symptoms or have tested positive for Covid-19, or if anyone they live with, or have had recent personal contact with, tests positive for Covid-19.

If a staff member is believed to have been exposed, we will document the event in the form below. If the person they were exposed to develops symptoms, then the staff member will have to self-isolate for

14 days. Should the staff member also develop symptoms or test positive, then any other staff member they were in contact with will also have to self-isolate.

Name: _____	Date of exposure: _____
Nature of the exposure _____	
Has the person they were exposed to developed any symptoms or tested positive for Covid-19?	Yes/No
IF YES – Name of the staff members this person was in contact with: _____	
IF NO – Has the exposed staff member developed any symptoms or tested positive for Covid-19? _____	
Return to work date: _____	

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