



COVID-19 UPDATE – March 26, 2020

The trajectory of the infection

Since January 27, 2020 when BC recorded its first COVID-19 positive test result, predictably BC numbers have grown and, as of March 25, have reached 659 cases from 31,739 tests administered. Saskatchewan has 86 confirmed cases based on 6,270 tests while Nova Scotia has 68 cases based on 2,840 tests. We are unaware of any Paper Excellence employees who have tested positive to date and those employees who traveled outside Canada or have symptoms have all self-isolated. On March 24, BC's top doctor said she believes that BC is "*not on the same trajectory as Italy*". While we expect to see all provincial infection curves start to flatten soon, we must continue to be vigilant by embracing the measures recommended by our governments and their health and safety authorities.

So where do we go from here?

Today, BC followed the United States, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan in declaring pulp and paper operations as essential services which may continue to operate as they supply critical pulps for hygiene products and food grade packaging and papers which support takeout food supplies. We appreciate the extraordinary dedication of our employees in these very unsettling times and look forward to remaining part of this vital supply chain by ensuring each of our operations are taking unprecedented measures to maintain operations and help slow the transmission of COVID-19.

Protecting yourself, your family and co-workers

On March 5, we enacted a company-wide COVID-19 operating plan which creates a safe work environment for all employees, minimizes the spread of the virus and enables on-going operations. We still are confident that our plan and each of the mill's specific operating procedures must be meticulously followed to deliver the protection needed. Those steps include:

1. Smart hygiene like hand washing, avoiding facial touching, coughing into your sleeve, and properly cleaning shared work spaces.
2. Social distancing of 2 meters, no physical contact and no business travel.
3. Minimizing visits to sites by contractors, suppliers or consultants that are not essential to the safe, efficient operation of the mill.
4. Self-monitoring for symptoms and self-isolation for 10 days if you are showing symptoms or self-isolation for 14 days if you have had close contact with anyone who has tested positive or has a presumptive positive diagnosis.

Maintaining your mental health through this event

The global COVID-19 crisis in many ways is more of a threat to our mental health than our physical wellbeing. The Canadian Mental Health Association has suggested tips to help deal with the uncertainty which include:

1. Get regular daily exercise, get enough sleep every night and make time for your hobbies
2. Even though we are isolating when not at work, maintain connections with friends and family through phone calls, video chats and outdoor activities at a distance
3. Cut back on your exposure to news and social media
4. Help others that are in need especially the elderly and medically at-risk persons

Additional resources can be found at www.anxietycanada.com and online.bouncebackonline.ca or through your local EFAP provider.