
March 19, 2020

Mr. Len Kaskiw
Chief Mines Inspector,
Mine Safety Unit, OHS Division
Labour Relations and Workplace Safety

via mail: leonard.kaskiw@gov.sk.ca

Dear Mr. Kaskiw:

RE: SMA Member Company Pandemic Plans, COVID-19 Policies and non-essential Mine Inspections

The Saskatchewan mining industry is implementing their respective Pandemic Plans and related policies related to the COVID-19 pandemic. These plans are based on science and follow the advice of the relevant provincial and federal health authorities. This includes the requirement for social distancing. Notably, the province of Saskatchewan has just declared a “State of Emergency”, underscoring the importance of this issue.

It is with this urgency in mind, that I would respectfully request that the **Mine Safety Unit immediately forego all non-essential (routine) visits to mine and mill sites, as well as corporate offices.** This will support the “social distancing” efforts underway to “flatten the epidemic curve” and respect the direction of the Saskatchewan Chief Medical Officer, Government of Saskatchewan directives, as well as mining company policies.

As you are uniquely well-positioned to know, the mining sector is an adopter of leading indicators, rather than relying of lagging indicators. In the case of COVID-19, this means that companies have Pandemic Plans in place and that they taken a number of proactive measures to ensure the safety of their workforce, contractors, families and communities. **This includes adopting “social distancing” measures that would limit contact of their employees with other individuals including restricting access to the site for non-essential contractors and other visitors.** Respecting that the Mine Inspectors within the Mine Safety Unit have the authority to enter a mine site, my request is that non-essential inspections and meeting be suspended until such time as the need to provide “social distancing efforts” is also suspended. Other measures undertaken include the suspension of all in-person, non-essential meetings, restricting travel and providing modified work arrangements including rotational shifts and working from home.

It is envisioned that any essential mine inspections would be conducted as required, as well as non-face to face meetings with mine site employees, such as the OH Committees. Communication with appropriate mine site personnel in advance of an essential inspection would ensure that the COVID-19 protocols can be efficiently implemented, and that required personnel are available for an efficient and productive meeting.

Thank you for consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. Given the rapidly evolving status of COVID-19 and related actions, I look forward to your timely response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Schwann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pam Schwann, P. Geo, M. Sc. Pro. Dir.
President

cc. Ms. Donna Johnson, Deputy Minister, Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Mr. Ray Anthony, Executive Director, OHS Division, Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
SMA Board of Directors
Mr. Brad Sigurdson, Vice-President, SMA