

For Immediate Release

April 2, 2020

## **Oil sands identified as an essential industry, taking active measures to limit potential COVID-19 exposure**

*Fort McMurray* – Last week, the Government of Alberta released a [list of essential services](#). The list includes businesses and services that are critical infrastructure and services that can continue to operate. These businesses must follow Alberta Health Services (AHS) guidelines and have proper risk mitigation protocols and procedures.

The government has identified the oil sands and our supply chains as an essential industry providing Albertans and Canadians with energy to heat their homes, fuel necessary for transportation, agriculture and food supply, powering critical health care infrastructure like hospitals and ambulances and contributing to Alberta's electric grid. One-third of total net generation of Alberta's electricity comes from oil sands producers (Source: AESO).

Member companies have been taking active steps to reduce the impact and exposure of COVID-19.

- Companies have instructed all non-essential staff to work from home.
- Oil sands facilities are limited to site-critical staff only and are changing schedules/rotations. This has reduced the workforce on site by up to 60 per cent and the frequency of staff rotations.

In addition, the oil sands industry is utilizing on-site resources, professionals, medical clinics and supplies to support AHS and minimize the burden on the local health system.

An updated guideline has been released by AHS regarding necessary pandemic measures at work camps, the document is available [here](#). We expect our employees to follow the AHS-mandated measures, such as keeping workers at physical distances in the workplace and on buses. We have implemented screening procedures, as well as enhanced workplace hygiene and cleaning.

Detailed examples of protocols and measures oil sands companies are undertaking include:

### **Screening/Self-isolation Protocol**

A worker, whether coming by road or air, goes through a screening procedure before entering site. This can be in the form of a daily COVID-19 assessment questionnaire and/or a temperature check.

If the on-site worker displays symptoms that meet COVID-19 screening criteria, such as a cough, sore throat, fever, or shortness of breath, they are assessed by the on-site clinical staff and immediately required to:

- Self-isolate in their own room, with their own bathroom and meals delivered to their room.
- Workers that are self-isolating are removed from the general workforce population.

## **Workforce**

- All non-essential staff has been directed to work from home.
- Some scheduled turnarounds have been postponed to minimize activity on site while physical distancing requirements are in place.

## **Physical Distancing**

- Areas including lobbies, lounges, gyms and recreational spaces have been closed or are being managed aggressively.
- Tables and chairs have been removed from dining halls to increase the spacing between individuals.
- Some companies have used tape in common areas to mark two-metre distances.
- The meals have switched from buffet to pre-packaged or are served by staff and with disposable utensils.
- More time is allocated to meals or meal times are being staggered to accommodate physical distancing and minimize exposure.

## **Sanitation**

- All companies have implemented advanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
- Spaces are cleaned more frequently and more thoroughly.
- There are required PPE standards for cleaning and specific high-grade cleaning agents that are used.

## **Transportation**

- Implementing protocols for the safe transfer of workers in and out of the region and safely back to their homes. The efforts include:
  - More flights and staggering flight times.
  - Flights flying at reduced capacity to minimize exposure.
  - Limiting the number of people on buses (one per row).
  - Offering safe repatriation busing services to major hubs.

Should you have company specific questions, please contact the company directly.

*For more information contact:*

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