

On March 11th, 2020, the World Health Organization (“WHO”) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. As this Coronavirus continues to spread globally, including the first confirmed death in the Windsor-Essex County Area and cases continuing to increase locally, commerce and communities are being impacted. Your CCI-Windsor-Essex Chapter is monitoring the situation and wants to provide you with useful tools and resources for your condominium corporation or business.

Resources below include links to a Business Pandemic Preparedness Checklist, a Business Continuity Guide, and a Crisis Communication Plan. Also included in this information packet are various tips specific to the condominium industry including: Best Practices for Janitorial and HVAC, Legal weigh-ins on privacy and obligations as well as further details on COVID-19.

For the most up-to-date information about COVID-19:

- [Windsor-Essex County Health Unit](#)
- [Government of Ontario](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)

Resources for your Business:

- [Business Pandemic Preparedness Checklist from Workplace Safety & Prevention Services \(WSPS\)](#)
- [Business Continuity Guide from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#)
- [Crisis Communication Plan from The Canadian Chamber of Commerce](#)

The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit recommends taking the following actions to avoid the continuous spread of germs and viruses:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoiding close contact with people who are ill
- Self-isolating and staying home when you are feeling ill.
- Considering protective self-separation if you are a person at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19, such as older adults, those with chronic underlying medical conditions, and people with compromised immune systems, especially if COVID-19 is known to be spreading in your community.
- Cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are frequently touched
- Practising physical distancing by staying at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from the nearest person
- Creating an emergency preparedness plan to ensure you have what you need in case of self-isolation

We also encourage you to continue to remain up to date with the latest local updates, by checking local health authorities, including the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit Website, as well as the Governments of Ontario and Canada websites.

COVID-19 Symptoms, Risk Mitigation and Vulnerable Populations

This information sheet has a list of currently-known symptoms, risk mitigation and vulnerable populations, as it is known on March 11, 2020. For the most up-to-date information, please see our links on the first page of our COVID-19 document. CCI-Windsor-Essex are not medical or legal experts and are doing their best to impart information to our members.

Symptoms:

COVID-19 is a virus that is responsible for a range of symptoms similar to the common cold to that of a more serious illness such as Severe Acute Respirator Syndrome (SARS-CoV) and the flu. The most common symptoms are:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to the virus. The Public Health Agency of Canada states: If you have even mild symptoms, stay home and call the public health authority in the province or territory you are in to inform them. They will provide advice on what you should do. **Ontario PHA is: 1-866-797-0000**. OPA is closed at 4:30pm. You can also call **Ontario Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000, Public Health Agency of Canada at 1-833-784-4397**, or the **Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 519-258-2146 ext. 1420**.

Risk Mitigation:

Coronaviruses are most commonly transmitted from an infected person through:

- Respiratory droplets, when you cough or sneeze
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands

Due to these transmissions, possible mitigation measures are:

- Avoiding large crowds and gatherings of people
- Engage in physical distancing, which includes not shaking hands, kissing or hugging

Vulnerable Populations:

- Aged 65 and over
- Those with compromised immune systems
- Those with underlying medical conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and hypertension

COVID-19 INFECTION PREVENTION IN A CONDO COMMUNITY SETTING WITH JANITORIAL BEST PRACTICES

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19, by touching a surface or object that has the Coronavirus on it and then touching his/her own mouth, nose, or possibly eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Instead, transmission of Coronavirus occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets by close, person-to-person contact. However, since Coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials, cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection, as necessary, is a best practice measure for prevention of spreading the Coronavirus and fuelling COVID-19 and other viral, respiratory illnesses in a close, condominium-community setting.

WHAT PRACTICAL STEPS CAN BE TAKEN BY THE BUILDING SERVICES PROVIDER OR SUPERINTENDENT:

- Onsite building services and janitorial staff should be trained on how to properly wear and use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as disposable gloves
- Properly use provided cleaning solutions, including accurately following recommended dilution ratios
- Use microfibre cloths and disinfecting cleanser. According to the EPA, cleaning with microfibre can reduce surface bacteria by 99% compared to just 30% with traditional cotton material
- Allow adequate time for the product to 'dwell' on the surface to kill the virus
- Modify staff routines and duties to prioritize more frequent cleanings of touchpoints including door handles and push plates, light switches, elevator call buttons, washrooms particularly toilets and toilet handles, faucets and sinks, exercise equipment, railings, etc.
- Change cleaning solutions/wipes/mops frequently
- Ensure hand soap and sanitizer dispensers are kept refilled
- Practise good personal hygiene habits including frequent handwashing, physical distancing and covering of coughs and sneezes
- In the event of an outbreak in the condo community, modify hours of work to times when less interactions with people might occur
- Disinfect large areas by means of an electrostatic fogger/atomizer and appropriate disinfectant

WHAT CAN CONDOMINIUM BOARDS AND THEIR PROPERTY MANAGEMENT DO?

- Purchase and install additional wall mounted or free-standing hand sanitizer stations throughout common areas
- Purchase hospital grade (DIN numbered) disinfecting wipes and cleansers for use by the onsite janitorial/superintendent staff
- Consider contracting additional hours of janitorial services by your Building Services Provider
- Educate owners and residents on what they can each do preventatively (i.e.: handwashing, etc.) Download posters from government websites and display in common areas
- Update owners and residents on changes they may observe in the building (i.e. surfaces looking 'wet' with cleaning solution, different types of cleaning methods implemented)
- Work collaboratively with your Building Services Provider. Communicate openly and frequently
- In the event of an outbreak, inform your Building Services Provider immediately

- Temporarily close access to amenities so efforts can be concentrated on cleaning high traffic areas
- Discontinue use of guest suites for travelers
- Arrange for adequate, or even additional, garbage bins onsite in case of service interruption

COVID-19 HVAC BEST PRACTICES

Currently, there is no evidence that Coronavirus is an airborne virus. It appears to be transmitted via droplets and direct contact with contaminated surfaces. That said, small particles can remain airborne for a period of time. Any well-designed and well-maintained HVAC system incorporates the following:

- Clean air supply;
- Containment and exhaust of contaminated air;
- Dilution of air in a space via supply of exterior fresh air;
- Maintaining proper pressure differentials to control air movement;
- Air cleaning and filtration.

Therefore, it is important that you understand the design of your HVAC system and ensure it is maintained and operating as intended to foster a healthy, interior-building environment.

Taking the following steps can improve the overall performance of your HVAC system and help maintain a healthy building:

- Clean/replace air filters regularly and ensure the proper filter is utilized as this can affect airflow and performance;
- Ensure all portions of the HVAC system are in operation as intended. Do not shut down fresh air intakes or pressurization fans;
- Verify proper functionality of all exhaust systems within the building including unit exhausts.
- Ensure residents have not sealed over their exhausts;
- Maintain proper pressurization of hallways and stairwells by ensuring all portions of the HVAC system are in operation and that all stairwell doors are automatically closing. Do not prop open any doors.

Should anyone within your building be placed in self isolation due to any illness, the most effective measure to take is to ensure that the occupant has a functional exhaust and that they are utilizing it.

Additional information may be found on the ASHRAE web site at:

<https://www.ashrae.org/about/news/2020/ashrae-resources-available-to-address-covid-19-concerns>

ASHRAE's Position Document on Airborne Infections Diseases may be found here:

<https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/about/position%20documents/airborne-infectious-diseases.pdf>

COVID-19 - Community Protection & Privacy: How to Communicate

As commonly known, condominiums have the legal duty to protect individuals living, working or visiting their community. In addition, when condominiums collect information particular to a unit or unit owner, such information must be treated to ensure privacy. With COVID-19, these contrasting duties impose strong tensions in the path a condominium may take to both to protect the community while also ensuring privacy. The following are yardsticks and guides to this topic which condominiums should consider.

Protection

Condominiums have a duty to protect individuals from dangerous situations, which present a threat to either their property or person. (Section 117 of the *Condominium Act, 1998*). Condominiums are also the occupier of the common elements, with the duty to ensure that the use of such is reasonably safe. (Section 26 of the *Condominium Act, 1998*). In addition, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* legislates that employers must protect employees from health and safety hazards.

Privacy

Condominiums must preserve the privacy of information or records that pertain to a particular unit. (Section 55(4) (c) of the *Condominium Act, 1998*). In addition, no person shall disclose to another party identifiable information indicating the person's infection with a public health disease. (Section 39(1) of the *Public Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990*). If a condominium is aware that the diagnosis of COVID-19 may affect the condominium, the following approach should be considered:

- The information should be provided in objective and factually-based language;
- Any information pertaining attributable to the diagnosed individual should be removed, especially name, age and gender, to ensure that the reader cannot discern the identity of the individual;
- If the Condominium is aware that community-to-community infection could continue within it, the communication should include enough information for fellow unit occupants, guests and service providers to be alerted to the risk and to allow mitigative steps to be taken.

For example, public notices could include:

"Recently, the Board of Directors has become aware that a service provider to the Condominium was diagnosed with COVID-19. The service provider is no longer on-site and shall only return to duties when medically permitted. The Condominium is cleaning the common elements, including hallways, elevators and doors as a preventative measure."

"Recently, the Board of Directors has become aware that a unit occupant has been diagnosed with COVID-19. The unit occupant is conducting an on-site, self-quarantine. All unit occupants, their guests and agents of the Condominium are reminded to practise precautionary protocols, including physical distancing, hand washing and/or hand sanitizing."

In short, communication should be factual, aiming to both protect the community at large and the individual's privacy.