



Public Health
Santé publique
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

December 10, 2020

Dear Mining Operators and Contractors:

Re: Importance of COVID-19 Precautions in the Mining Sector

As you may be aware, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit is actively investigating an outbreak of COVID-19 associated with Barrick Hemlo, Williams Mine located outside of Marathon, Ontario.

This outbreak is an important reminder of the need for all mining companies to have comprehensive policies and procedures in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. This includes key components such as active screening, physical distancing, hand hygiene, masking, and appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Of equal importance is ensuring that all employees and contractors adhere to these precautions at all times.

I am sharing this information with you proactively, for your consideration of the implications this may have for your own facilities as COVID-19 infections continue to rise in many communities and pandemic fatigue may be setting in.

Outbreak investigations in other sectors have found widespread PPE violations and/or close contact among workers to have been underlying factors in workplace COVID-19 outbreaks. This includes activities such as workers eating meals together unmasked and in close proximity. I am encouraging you to remind your workers of the importance of adhering to recommended public health measures at all times, even when they are taking a break from their work.

COVID-19 outbreaks within mining facilities across Northern Ontario highlight how quickly the virus can spread in these settings, and the very real implications that this has on mining operations, workers, and their families.

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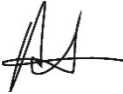
Mining Operators and Contractors

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Thank you for your attention to this very important matter and for your ongoing commitment to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PS', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

PS:ja