

This plan outlines the operation of the office, shop and field activities of the Taber Irrigation District during the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan will follow the most up to date directives and guidance from the Chief Medical Officer of the Government of Alberta. Note that irrigation operations and businesses that support the food supply chain are deemed essential services: <https://www.alberta.ca/essential-services.aspx>

Current Status from GOA: Maximum of 15 in a group, no critical infrastructure members or those at greater risk (over 60, chronic medical conditions). Must self-isolate for 14 days if out of the country, or in close contact with someone out of the country within last 14 days or experiencing symptoms of cold or flu. Maintain 2 m social distancing, wash hands often, avoid touching your face.

Office and Shop: Signs on doors restricting access to those who are free of cold and flu symptoms and not out of country, or with close contact of anyone out of country, in past 14 days. No handshakes, maintain 2 metres distance, wash hands often, use sanitizer, avoid touching your face. Office Manager/District Superintendent to ensure all commonly handled hard surfaces are sanitized daily. Use assigned workspaces, pens, keyboards, tools, phones, vehicles, equipment to minimize cross-contamination. If unsure (e.g. fever, dry cough), stay home until you are confident you are cold/flu symptom-free. Eat lunch at home or use the same seat every time. If 2 metres cannot be maintained simultaneously, stagger your break/meal times. Office staff that remain for lunch are to eat lunch at their desks. Wash hands immediately after lunch and washroom breaks, upon entry to TID buildings and as often as appropriate for your type of work. **If you have even mild cold/flu symptoms stay home** and follow Government of Alberta direction on self-isolation. Work with your supervisor to be as productive as possible from home. Claim sick days on your timesheet and tag “ISO”, referring to self-isolation.

Routine Meetings: Face-to-face meetings are essential for some activities, but maintain 2 metres distance. Wash hands immediately after handling any common surfaces (e.g. tables, desks, drawings, tools, equipment).

Board Meetings: Board meetings to continue face-to-face, call-in option for older/at-risk members. Board room surfaces to be sanitized in advance and afterwards. No coffee – bring your own. Run through full meeting without lunch if possible. Single-serving meals/snacks to be brought in for board members as required. All others to bring bagged lunch and eat at their desk or eat at home. To provide 2 metre distance, recording secretary will be at a separate table and O&M/Project reports will have District Superintendent/District Engineer either sit on the periphery of the room or be called into the meeting separately.

Ditchriders: Ditchriders are essential front-line staff and are to self-isolate as much as practicable starting April 1st. They are not to enter TID buildings. Ditchriders are to use only their assigned vehicle and may not take passengers. They are to use their time before startup to review their records, assess their areas, complete routine maintenance and communicate regularly with their supervisor. They are to use telephone or text to communicate with other staff and water users. They may meet outside on site as required to explain specific situations. Any tools or equipment picked up by or delivered to Ditchriders must be sanitized before handling. Ditchriders are encouraged to stop off at home frequently to use their own kitchens, washrooms and work areas. Reasonable accommodations to improve efficiency will be considered on a case-by-case basis (e.g. designated materials pickup areas).

Other Field Staff: Maintain social distancing and related practices while in the field. Upon return to the office, immediately wash hands.

Planning for Escalated Restrictions

Staff interact with each other on a regular basis and may be considered in ‘regular close contact’. This is applicable so long as staff practice social distancing on their own time. There is also risk associated with unintended transmission from unknown community sources and COVID-19 being transmitted within the work environment. The plan above is intended to prevent the unintentional spread among co-workers by limiting the potential for transmission and keeping sick staff away from the office/shop and other staff. In the event of mandated office and shop restrictions or closure, or where board/manager proactively direct, the office and shop may need to escalate isolation practices. Stages are as follows:

Stage 1 Escalation – limited staff in TID buildings: One staff per area. Dedicated bathrooms. No kitchen use except by dedicated user. This will require limiting staffing in office and shop to 2 each. Dedicate one staff to administer common areas OR sanitize after each use (e.g. photocopier controls, door handles, shop functions/storage areas). Other staff to work from home or from their vehicle and use kitchen/washroom facilities from home. A more detailed plan designating people/areas will be prepared if this contingency is required. No public/board entry. Meetings by phone or digital conferencing only.

Stage 2 Escalation – assigned staff only in TID buildings: Specific staff members are authorized entry into specific TID buildings. They are only ones permitted to work within the building and will be the ones answering calls, conducting maintenance, receiving/procuring parts and supplies, etc. All hand-contact surfaces are to be sanitized before receiving deliveries into TID buildings and before dropping off for TID staff or contractors. All procured tools/equipment/materials are to be delivered by the assigned staff member outside the TID buildings using sanitary means.

Stage 3 Escalation: Access to TID buildings is mandatory for safety and security of property. Stage 3 would be an escalation of Stage 2 such that each building would be an extension of the self-isolation area of the respective staff member.

Coverage for Self-Isolated/Incapacitated Staff

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring critical business functions are maintained. These include water delivery and associated critical maintenance and engineering support for TID conveyance works (including Alberta One-Call), accounts payable, payroll, execution of agreements, reception/communication, board packages/meetings, health & safety. Cross-training, internal or external backups, processes (including passwords) are to be identified and shared at appropriate level.

Critical Business Relationships

Departments are to identify and confirm continuity planning with those agencies and businesses that we rely on to provide critical services (e.g. EBMS, Delphi, Taber Machine Shop, BlueWave, etc.) and list alternates. Anticipate temporary service interruptions and plan ahead for these.

*** This plan is current as of the date above and subject to change. Please take note of all revisions ***

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