

# Municipality of West Elgin

## Policy 2020-07

### COVID-19 Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment & Clothing Policy

Effective Date: , 2020

Review Date:

#### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimized through the use of personal protective equipment and clothing.

#### 2. Scope

This procedure applies to all West Elgin staff.

#### 3. Definitions

**N-95 Face Filtering Respirator (FFR)**-A type of respirator which removes particles from the air that is breathed through it. These respirators filter out at least 95% of very small (0.3 micron) particles. N95 FFRs are capable of filtering out all types of particles, including bacteria and viruses.

**Respirator**-A personal protective device that is worn on the face or head and covers at least the nose and mouth. A respirator is used to reduce the wearer's risk of inhaling hazardous airborne particles (including infectious agents), gases, or vapours. Respirators are certified according to standards established by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH.) A respirator is tight-fitting. When properly fitted and donned, minimal leakage occurs around edges of the respirator when the wearer inhales.

**Surgical or Medical Masks**-Medical devices that use materials that block larger particles, splashes, and liquids. They are not tight-fitting and don't provide complete protection for the wearer from exposure to smaller particles. They also protect others from coughs, sneezes and droplets of the wearer.

**Facial Covering/Non-Medical Mask**-This type of covering or mask loosely covers the wearer's nose and mouth. It is not tight-fitting and is not effective in blocking virus particles that may be transmitted by coughing, sneezing, aggressive speaking/shouting or medical procedures. They may be commercially-produced or homemade, and may include bandannas and facial scarves.

## 4. References

- Occupational Health & Safety Act
- Regulations for Industrial Establishments
- Risk-informed Decision-making Guidelines for Workplaces and Businesses During the COVID- 19 Pandemic, Public Health Agency of Canada
- COVID-19 Guidance for Industry Operators, Ministry of Health

## 5. Procedures

### 5.1 General

- a) Personal respiratory protection for staff is not required in the majority of work situations.
- b) Firefighters will be provided with appropriate personal respiratory protection (N-95 or equivalent) for work activities which bring staff in close contact with others.
- c) Some work situations may require the use of personal respiratory protection (N-95 or equivalent) where there is a significant risk of exposure to airborne droplets from another person and other effective precautions cannot be used.

### 5.2 Facial Coverings & Non-Medical Masks

- a) Health Canada encourages the use of a facial covering/non-medical mask as an additional measure that the wearer can take to protect others, even if the wearer does not have COVID-19 symptoms. This may further prevent transmission from persons who are pre-symptomatic or who have no symptoms.
- b) Facial coverings/non-medical masks provide another way to cover the mouth and nose and prevent the wearer's respiratory droplets from contaminating others or landing on surfaces.
- c) Facial covering/non-medical masks are useful for short periods of time, when physical distancing (2 metres) is not possible in public settings or workplace activities. **FACIAL COVERING/NON-MEDICAL MASKS DO NOT PROVIDE THE WEARER WITH A RELIABLE LEVEL OF PROTECTION FROM INHALING SMALLER AIRBORNE PARTICLES AND ARE NOT CONSIDERED RESPIRATORY PROTECTION.**
- d) In the course of working, staff may be required to be in public settings or work situations where physical distancing is not possible.
- e) Homemade masks may include masks made of cloth. The mask may have a pocket to insert other masks or filters.
- f) Donning and use:

- Wash hands thoroughly or use approved hand sanitizer immediately prior to putting on the facial covering or mask
- Ensure it is well fitted and non-gaping
- Never share with others
- Avoid touching the face, facial covering/non-surgical mask during use
- Change the facial covering/mask as soon as it becomes crumpled, damp or soiled
- Use good hand hygiene throughout the period of use
- Wash hands immediately before removing the mask
- Wash hands immediately after removing the mask
- If disposable type is used, discard immediately
- Store the facial covering/non-surgical mask in a plastic bag until it can be laundered following use and before re-use
- Empty the bag directly into a washing machine and launder with other items using a hot cycle, and bleach if possible. Dry thoroughly before re-use.

### **5.3 Face-Filtering Respiratory Protection-N-95 or equivalent**

- a) Prior to being issued respiratory protection, the employee will be fit-tested for each type of respiratory protection. Records of fit testing shall be retained by the department supervisor.
- b) Fit testing will be done according to CSA Z94.4-Selection, Fit and Care of Respirators.
- c) Fit testing shall be repeated every two years or where there has been a significant change to the employee (e.g. facial surgery, weight fluctuations, and other changes to facial size or shape that may affect the fit and seal of the respirator.)
- d) Medical fitness assessment for respiratory protection may be required in some circumstances.
- e) Staff who are required to use, or who choose to use, a respirator shall be clean shaven. Facial hair (beard, goatee, stubble, mustache, etc.) is prohibited.
- f) Staff will not use respirators that are defective, worn, damaged, or have reached the end of useful life or which are no longer able to provide adequate protection.
- g) Prior to use, the respirator shall be inspected for damage, wear, soiling, need for filter replacement, or other defects. Defective respirators or components shall be replaced or repaired prior to use.
- h) Employees shall not alter, repair, or make any modifications to respirators except as specified by the manufacturer.
- i) General requirements for donning and removing a disposable respirator are as follows:
  - Wash or sanitize hands prior to donning
  - Pre-stretch top and bottom straps before placing respirator on the face.
  - Cup the respirator in your hand, with the nosepiece at your fingertips, allowing the headbands to hang freely below your hand.
  - Position the respirator under your chin with the nosepiece up. Pull the top

strap over your head resting it high at the top back of your head. Pull the bottom strap over your head and position it around the neck below the ears.

- Place your fingertips from both hands at the top of the metal nosepiece. Using two hands, mould the nose area to the shape of your nose by pushing inward while moving your fingertips down both sides of the nosepiece.
- Pinching the nosepiece using one hand may result in improper fit and less effective respirator performance. Use two hands.
- Perform a user seal check prior to each wearing. To check the respirator-to-face seal, place both hands completely over the respirator and exhale sharply. Be careful not to disturb the position of the respirator. If air leaks around nose, readjust the nosepiece as described. If air leaks at the respirator edges, work the straps back along the sides of your head. If you CANNOT achieve a proper seal, DO NOT enter the contaminated area until a correctly fitting respirator is obtained.
- Follow all instructions provided by the manufacturer
- Avoid touching the face or respirator during use
- Change the respirator as soon as it becomes crumpled, damp or soiled
- Use good hand hygiene throughout the period of use
- Wash or sanitize hands immediately before removing the mask
- Discard immediately into a garbage bag or lined garbage receptacle
- Wash or sanitize hands immediately after removing the mask.

## 5.4 Gloves

- a) Gloves are not required and necessary for the majority of work activities and situations. Adherence to proper hand hygiene practices is essential to prevent transmission of disease.
- b) Gloves should be used when cleaning and sanitizing work surfaces to prevent contact with chemical agents and in accordance with the label and SDS instructions.
- c) If direct contact with a potentially infectious surface or person is necessary, disposable gloves should be used, but must be discarded immediately after use. NEVER RE-USE CONTAMINATED GLOVES BECAUSE THE GLOVES WILL TRANSMIT THE MICROORGANISM IN THE SAME WAY THAT TOUCHING WITH BARE HANDS WILL TRANSMIT.
- d) If gloves are used, avoid touching the face.
- e) When removing gloves, do the following:
  - Pinch and hold the outside of the glove near the wrist area.
  - Peel the glove downwards, away from the wrist, turning the glove inside out.
  - Pull the glove away until it is removed from the hand and hold the inside-out glove with the gloved hand.
  - With the un-gloved hand, slide fingers under the wrist of the remaining glove, taking care not to touch the outside of the glove.
  - Again, peel glove downwards, away from the wrist, turning the glove inside out.
  - Continue to pull the glove down and over the inside-out glove being

- held in your gloved hand.
- This will ensure that both gloves are inside out, one glove enveloped in the other, with no contaminant on the bare hands.
- Discard gloves in garbage.
- Thoroughly wash or sanitize hands after removal.

## **5.5 Eye & Face Protection**

- a) If there is a risk of contact of the eyes or face with droplets or liquids, a face shield or splash goggles should be used.
- b) In this case, eye protection or a face shield should be used in conjunction with a face fitting respirator.
- c) Wash or sanitize hands prior to donning the goggles or face shield.
- d) Avoid touching the face when using goggles or face shield.
- e) Wash or sanitize hands prior removing goggles or face shield.
- f) Thoroughly clean and disinfect goggles or face shield after use, according to the manufacturer specifications.
- g) Place the goggles or face shield in a zipper-sealed bag or other clean storage location for next use.

## **5.6 Clothing Hygiene**

- a) After use, clothing worn at work should be immediately removed and placed in the washing machine or in a bag away from possible contact with others until laundered.
- b) Launder clothing as usual, preferably in hot water, and dry thoroughly. Most viruses are killed during regular washing processes.
- c) Wash or sanitize hands thoroughly after removing and handling clothing prior to laundering it.