1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this exposure control plan is to minimize our employees' risk of exposure to infectious disease as well as to reduce the risk of transmission to others should exposure occur. It is SPARQ Industries & Automation (SI&A) policy to ensure that our employee's risk of exposure to infectious disease is minimized in a manner that meets the BC Occupational Health & Safety Regulation (OHSR 5.54) and World Health Organization (WHO) requirements.

2.0 Scope

This exposure control plan covers all SI&A employees. While our employees are not expected to be at greater risk than other citizens, it is reasonable to assume that they may have some contact with the coronavirus at some point during the course of their duties.

3.0 Definitions

(None)

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 President: is responsible for:

- Assure the resources (safe work procedures, training, PPE and cleansing products) required to prevent employees from exposure to coronavirus are implemented and available.

- Assure that the employees are able to demonstrate an understanding of the control measures necessary in reducing employee exposure.

- Assure that this exposure control plan and accompanying safe work procedures are reviewed as necessary and revised as required.

- Assure that the contents of this plan and accompanying work procedures are posted and made available to all employees.

4.2 Project Supervisor: is responsible for:

- Coordinating all control measures on site to reduce exposure to coronavirus. This includes but is not limited to the following:
  - Confirm that all employees are fit for duty each day and are not presenting symptoms related to the disease.
  - Start of shift updates.
  - Reviewing safe work procedures.
  - Provision of adequate cleaning material and PPE.
  - Enforces compliance with physical distancing (2m distance).

- Assuring that employees are adequately instructed on the controls required to reduce exposure to infectious disease.

- Assures that Employees practice good hygiene and keep areas where they meet and eat food clean and tidy. This includes but is not limited to table surfaces, washrooms, telephones, keyboards, vehicles and mechanical equipment, tools and waste receptacles.

- Conduct inspections to ensure standards of cleanliness, hygiene and physical distancing are being maintained.

- Direct all work in a manner that eliminates or minimizes risk to employees.

4.3 Company Employees: are responsible for:

- Recognize the hazards associated with exposure to infectious disease. This includes the symptoms related to the disease and the potential of being a carrier of the virus and transmitting it to others. If the employee is sick, he/she must not come into work until the symptoms disappear.

- Follow established safe work procedures to prevent exposure, e.g. cleanliness, good hygiene, physical distancing, use of PPE and appropriate rest and diet.

- Clean up after preparing food and/or eating lunch.

- Wipes down commonly used surfaces in vehicles and tools with disinfectant wipes or other adequate cleaning materials.

- Reports areas of substandard cleanliness. Takes out garbage and waste on a regular basis.

- Report to supervisor if suffering from fever or cough. Doesn't come to work if not feeling well.

- If sickness persists; contacts health care professional.

5.0 Procedure

5.1 Engineering controls, such as isolation in a controlled environment, are a preferred means of eliminating or minimizing exposure to any infectious disease. However, the ubiquitous nature of coronavirus makes this impracticable on many worksites. More realistic and immediate control strategies include rigorous personal and area hygiene practices, following physical distancing requirements between employees, and using respiratory protection if physical distancing is difficult to maintain – or as directed by public health authorities and WorkSafeBC.

A number of low-cost measures can be taken to prevent the spread of coronavirus infection in the workplace. These measures include the following:

5.1.1 Make sure the workplace is clean and hygienic:

- Surfaces (desks and tables) and objects (telephones, keyboards) need to be regularly wiped down with disinfectant. This also includes vehicle cab (steering wheel, instrument) surfaces, mechanical equipment and tools.

5.1.2 Promote regular and thorough hand-washing by employees, contractors and clients:

- Put alcohol-based sanitizing hand rub dispensers in prominent places around the workplace and in vehicles. Make sure these dispensers are regularly refilled.

- Display posters promoting hand-washing. Wash with soap and water often for at least 20 seconds on every occasion.

- Discuss the need to practice good personal hygiene during toolbox talks, safety meetings and "safety moments" at the start of meetings.

5.1.3 Ensure there is soap and paper towels available in all washrooms and kitchen areas.

5.1.4 Keep lunch tables and food preparation areas clean. Regularly wash down lunch tables and food preparation areas. Dispose of trash in proper waste facilities.

5.1.5 Practice physical distancing on the job, in lunchrooms, during meetings and in vehicles (when possible). Home office interior space will be assessed an occupancy limit will be determined and posted. Space within the office will also be assessed with occupancy limit signs posted for common areas.

5.1.6 Use gloves when handling or touching materials that may be contaminated. Clean or replace the gloves on a regular basis.

5.1.7 N-95 disposable respirators and other forms of respiratory protection such as surgical masks will be worn by employees when performing tasks where physical distancing is a challenge and air circulation in the workspace is poor (indoors). Employees must wash their hands prior to putting respiratory protection on and before removing it.

Face coverings are to be worn by employees working in the home office while in common areas. Common areas have been defined as the main office entry, boardroom area and lunchroom/kitchen area[1].

5.1.8 Consult the provincial health authority before embarking on travel – either for work or pleasure. SI&A management will promote remote meetings for regular client business meetings and will make conscious choices to limit the amount of unnecessary interactions that could spread infection.

5.1.9 Should you develop a mild cough or low-grade fever (37.3 ºC or more), stay at home. If it all possible, work from home if you are displaying symptoms related to coronavirus, e.g. dry cough, difficulty breathing and fever. Contact your supervisor and inform them of your condition – do not come into work.

5.1.10 If an employee develops even a mild cough or low-grade fever (37.3 ºC or more) while at work, he/she will be asked to wash/sanitize their hands, provided a mask and enter quarantine. This means avoiding close contact (2 meters or greater) with people, including family members. He/she will need to contact their local health care provider or public health department to provide details on their condition, as applicable.

If the employee is severely ill (e.g. difficulty breathing, chest pain) 9-1-1 will be contacted.

[1] *Mandated in Order of the Provincial Health Officer – Workplace Safety (dated January 20, 2022).*

The best way all employees can protect themselves against coronavirus infection is to practice good hygiene; keep fingers out of your nose and mouth, keep hands away from the face and cover your mouth with the inner elbow when you cough. Physical distancing – keeping yourself 2m away from others – is also an effective control.

5.2 Should an employee test positive for coronavirus, the following steps will need to be taken:

- The employee will need to self-quarantine for 5 days. During this period, the employee will stay in contact with his/her supervisor to keep them updated on their status.

- If the employee is persistently asymptomatic, the infected employee can return to work after 5 days.

- All work areas and equipment which the infected employees may have come into contact with will be delineated as a “no-go” zone until these areas and equipment have been cleaned thoroughly using an effective cleaning product.

- Only after this cleaning will employees be authorized to re-enter the work area and/or equipment and work resume.

Employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the latest guidance prescribed by the BC Center for Disease Control regarding Covid-19 symptom identification and management.

http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19#testedpositive

6.0 Informative Coronavirus Medical Science Facts

6.1 The virus is not a living organism, but an RNA Virus covered by a protective layer of lipid (fat). It’s little more than a packet of genetic material surrounded by a spikey protein shell one-thousandth the width of an eyelash. As soon as it gets into a human airway, the virus hijacks our cells to create millions more versions of itself.

6.2 Since the virus is not a living organism but a virus, it is not killed but rather decays on its own. The disintegration time depends on the temperature, humidity and type of material where the virus lies.

6.3 The virus is very fragile; the only thing that protects it is a thin outer layer of fat. That is why any soap or detergent is the best remedy, because the foam cuts through the fat. (That is why you have to rub so much: for 20 seconds or more, to make a lot of foam). By dissolving the fat layer, the virus disperses and breaks down on its own.

Other hand-washing factors are comparatively less important. When deciding between using hot or cold water, "the short answer is, water temperature doesn't matter," says Donald Schaffner, a researcher at Rutgers University. There is no difference in how many microorganisms remain, so use whatever feels good for you. "If the water temperature is comfortable, what that means is that you're going to do the best, most careful job," he says. Likewise, the amount of soap you use need not be precise, provided you have enough to get a nice lather going.

6.4 Wash or sanitize your hands before and after touching mucosa, locks, knobs, switches, remote control, cell phone, watches, computers, desks, TV, etc., and when using the bathroom.

6.5 The Centre for Disease Control recommends that fingernails be kept short and that people should refrain from biting, chewing and picking at cuticles. While it's not known how long the coronavirus can live on skin or nails, longer nails or nails that aren't properly cleaned can harbor germs and potentially spread the coronavirus.

6.6 Alcohol or any mixture with alcohol over 70% will dissolve the external fat or lipid layer of the virus.

6.7 Diluted household bleach solutions may be used for cleansing and disinfecting surfaces. To make a bleach solution, mix 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water, or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.

6.8 The virus is not a living organism like bacteria; we cannot kill what is not alive with antibiotics. But the virus quickly disintegrates its structure with the precautions described above.

6.9 While the virus is glued to a porous surface, it is inert and will disintegrate over time. The following provides some idea of how the coronavirus can survive on various surfaces:

- 3 hours on fabric and porous material.
- 4 hours on copper.
- 24 hours on cardboard.
- 42 hours on metal.
- 72 hours on plastic.

6.10 If possible, do not shake dirty laundry. Dirty laundry, when shaken, can release the virus in the air which can then stay airborne for up to 3 hours and eventually lodge in your nose.

6.11 The virus CANNOT be absorbed through skin.

6.12 Vinegar is NOT useful because it does not break down the protective layer of fat on the virus.

6.13 Unlike the flu, the sensitivity of the coronavirus to temperature and humidity aren't known. Therefore, it is pure speculation to assume conditions for virus survivability will deteriorate in the spring and summer.

6.14 Room ventilation, open space, and the proper use and disinfection of high use rooms like toilets can effectively limit aerosol transmission of the coronavirus.

7.0 References

Harvard University Health: https://www.health.harvard.edu/diseases-and-conditions/coronavirus-resource-center

Center for Disease Control: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html

WorkSafe BC – Ventilation: https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/prevent-spread-communicable-disease-ventilation-air-circulation?lang=en

Work Safe BC – Construction Industry Guidance: https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/industry-specific-information/construction

Work Safe BC – Office Guidance: https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/industry-specific-information/offices

Government of BC: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus

BC Center of Disease Control – Mask Guidance: http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks

Workplace Safety - BC Health Order (dated January 20th, 2022):
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-workplace-safety-january-20-2022.pdf

Revision History:

Revision	Date yyyy-mm-dd	Description of changes	Requested By
0	2020-03-15	Initial Release	SI&A
1	2022-01-22	Updated with latest guidance from jurisdictional health authority.	SI&A