

COVID-19 SAFE OPERATING GUIDANCE

Using MEWPs, MCWPs and Hoists



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Introduction

This document is intended to provide practical guidance on safety measures to minimize exposure to COVID-19 for anyone using MEWPs, MCWPs or Construction hoists for work activities. COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person. Some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

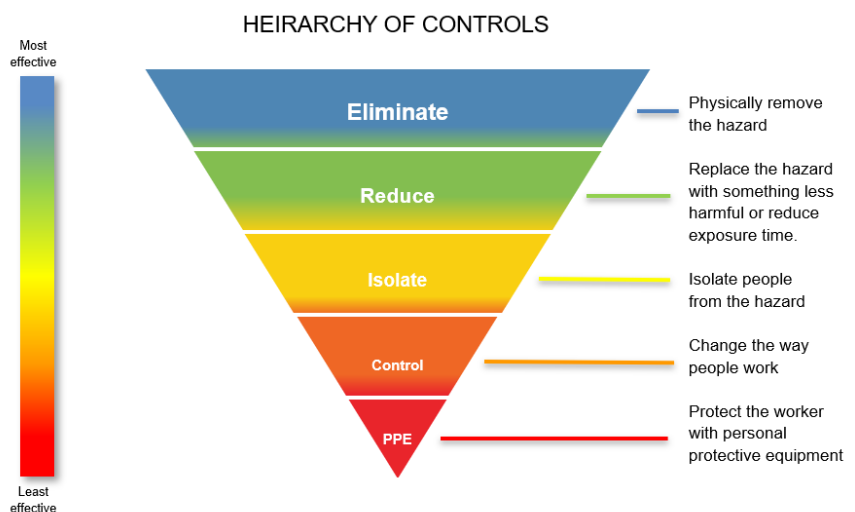
- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

The guidance covers social distancing and safety/hygiene requirements which aim to reduce the risk of infection to all personnel involved. The virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or speaks. These heavy droplets quickly fall on floors or surfaces. You can be infected by breathing in the virus if you are within one meter (3feet) of a person who has COVID-19, or by touching a contaminated surface and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands. It is not certain how long the virus survives on surfaces, but preliminary information on the COVID-19 virus indicate it may persist on differing surfaces from a few hours up to several days.

All organizations need to prepare a risk assessment of COVID-19 to ensure machines can be used and work undertaken while maintaining social distancing as advised within Government guidance. The risk assessment should be based on the hierarchy of control method to eliminate or reduce risk.

Government advice should always be followed. Additional measures may be identified in the risk assessment. These could include but not be limited to: social distancing measures, PPE, sanitization of machines.

By following Government advice, planning and preparing in advance, and implementing the findings of risk assessments, it is possible to undertake most work activities safely.



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Suggested measures to ensure a safe environment:

- Take control of how your personnel arrive, enter and leave the workplace to meet social distancing guidelines. Communicate this information to your workers in advance of them arriving
- Follow the recommended two meter (6 feet) social distancing guidelines where possible
- Where it is not possible to follow the guidelines in relation to an activity, e.g. sharing a work platform, determine whether that activity is critical for the organizations continuing operation
- If the task is deemed critical, take mitigating precautions to reduce the likelihood of transmission
- Coordinate and cooperate with other contractors and workers to prevent congregating
- Remind personnel (e.g. at daily briefings) of the specific control measures necessary to protect them, their friends, colleagues, families and the rest of the country
- Ensure first aid risk assessments have been updated to include additional COVID-19 risks e.g. potentially delayed response from emergency services

Practically applying the Hierarchy of Controls

Eliminate

Removing the hazard

- Personnel that are unwell or who live with someone that has symptoms of COVID-19 should not travel to or attend the workplace
- Prevent skin to skin and face to face contact
- Consider approved material handling attachments to reduce worker interface
- Daily briefings are important, hold briefings outside where possible to discuss updates
- All areas should be well ventilated, and windows open
- Decrease participants of meetings to only those that are necessary
- All participants should always be at least two meters apart
- Rearrange tasks to enable them to be done by one person e.g. by using an additional MEWP, or maintaining social distancing measures (two meters) within larger platforms or platforms with extending decks

Reduce

Reducing the hazard by implementing measures to reduce risk

- Where the social distancing measures cannot be applied e.g. in a MEWP platform
 - Minimize the frequency and time workers are within two meters of each other
 - Minimize the number of participants involved in activities
 - Personnel should work side by side, or facing away from each other, rather than face to face
 - Lower the personnel capacity of hoists to reduce congestion and contact.
- Regularly clean common touchpoints, doors, buttons, handles, vehicle cabs, tools, equipment etc.
- Increase ventilation in enclosed spaces
- Personnel should wash their hands before and after using any equipment and consider the use of single use gloves

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Isolate

Ensure proactive separation within the workspace

- Keep groups of people that **MUST** work within two meters e.g. in a boom platform, together in teams and do not change the workers within those teams
- Teams should be small and separated from other personnel where possible

Control

Manage the area of work to avoid unnecessary contact

- Where face to face working is essential to carry out tasks within two meters, aim to limit this to 15 minutes or less where possible
- Consider introducing a permit process for these activities to increase control
- Provide additional supervision to monitor and manage compliance

PPE

Protect personnel by using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) should not be shared. RPE designed for re-use should be sanitized before and after use (**Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)** is a particular type of **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**, used to protect the individual wearer against the inhalation of hazardous substances in the workplace air)
- Dispose of all single use PPE appropriately immediately after use to prevent reuse
- Where personnel are required to work in high COVID-19 risk environments, additional PPE should be considered specific to the COVID-19 risk

Behaviours

Minimizing the risk from the COVID-19 relies upon everyone within the workplace choosing to act and behave responsibly.

- Personnel that are involved in decision making and fully understand why decisions have been made, are far more likely to behave responsibly. It is critical an open and collaborative approach is taken between all
- Encourage open discussion and sharing of concerns in daily briefings reiterating key requirements to keep risks and controls highlighted

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Emergency response and first aid

The primary responsibility of any first aid intervention is to preserve life until the emergency services attend. Currently, the response times for emergency services could be longer than usual due to the exceptional demands placed upon them by COVID-19.

- An emergency and rescue plan is required for all Work at Height. The plan should be updated with relevant information contain current contact information, and practiced, taking additional precautions where social distancing will be compromised during a rescue operation
- First aid resources must be relevant and agreed in advance to the specific work taking place with potential of a delayed emergency response
- Where possible avoid high risk tasks during this time. When this is not possible, provide an internal emergency team capable of rescue and preserving life for an extended period
- Risk assessments must be reviewed to ensure first aid kits are effective

Cleaning

Stringent cleaning procedures should be in place throughout the workplace, in all shared areas and touch points. Focus for MEWPs, MCWPs and hoists:

- MEWP, MCWP and hoist controls
- Entry and exit points of any machine
- Door handles, handrails and guardrails
- Increase the frequency of waste removal during the day and always ensure the site removes all waste at the end of each day

Pre-use inspections by the operator

All work equipment requires pre-use inspection, this must continue in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance contained in the Operating Manual.

It is critical that all machines left unused for extended periods are subject to a pre-use inspection, function check and systematic check of the auxiliary controls before being permitted back into service. Any machine found with faults should be reported to the owner or rental company, isolated and tagged appropriately.

Annual Inspections and maintenance

All MEWPs, MCWPs and hoists require an annual inspection and periodic maintenance. It is critical, for the safety of your teams, these are continued throughout these challenging times.

To ensure continuation of inspections as required, a plan must be made allowing qualified service personnel access to machines, keeping a safe working environment at all times.

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You will need to:

- Communicate with the rental company/owner of the machine to coordinate these activities
- Supply the owner/rental company in advance with:
 - Any specific site rules and requirements
 - Details of how the service technician can gain access to the site
 - Contact details for specified person on site
- Create a safe area where the service tech conducting the maintenance or annual inspection can work while observing social distancing requirements
- Provide markings and barriers to prevent unauthorised access to the area being worked in
- Supply hand sanitizer and washing facilities to the service tech
- Brief the service tech on routes to and from the work area to the washing and toilet facilities
- Determine how to monitor the welfare of the service tech while they are on site and how to communicate in the event of an accident or emergency

IPAF Training for MEWPs, MCWP & Hoists

IPAF Training undertaken at an IPAF-approved Training Center will follow IPAF COVID-19 guidance.

If training is required, first consideration should be given to options that eliminate or reduce the need to undertake face to face training. IPAF eLearning or remote instructor-led training options are available. Contact your IPAF Training Center for details.

Where training **is required in a workplace** the following precautions should be implemented by the organisation prior to any training being undertaken.

Communication to candidates/instructors in advance of any training day

- Instructor and candidates to be informed of arrival time and how to enter the site in accordance with site rules
- An instructor or candidate showing symptoms of COVID-19 must not attend *
- An instructor or candidate experiencing symptoms within 14 days of the course must notify the IPAF Training Center to enable contact with all personnel
- Instructor and candidates should, where possible, bring their own PPE (including gloves, eye protection and face mask) These should be sanitary, appropriate and in good condition **
- How the instructor and candidates should enter/exit the training room and transition to the practical area
- Candidates should ideally bring their own food and drink, however if food or drink is provided it should be sealed in its original containers and sanitized prior to giving to candidates

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Preparation of your training facilities

Reduce risk and prepare the training facilities the day prior to training

- Deep clean of all facilities, door handles, chairs, desks, stationary with disinfectant effective against COVID-19
- Arrange the training room so candidates are not directly facing each other
- Where PPE and materials are provided for training, prepare all individually for the instructor and each candidate ensuring items are sanitized. If possible, items to be left on each candidate desk.
- A method of achieving social distancing must be maintained during transitions between areas. There must be a minimum of two meters between each candidate and any other person including the instructor.
- Transition between the training room, toilets, refreshment facilities and practical area should be planned, marked and made clear to the instructor and all candidates
- The instructor will need to take photographs of group and individuals and must be able maintain social distancing rules of two meters apart
- Washing facilities and hand sanitiser (>60% alcohol based) must be made available for the instructor and all candidates
- Smoking or vaping should only occur in the designated area and a method of maintaining social distancing employed

IPAF practical testing

Social distancing must be maintained during transitions between the training room and practical area. This route should be planned and communicated to the instructor who will inform the candidate. The following must be provided:

- A practical area large enough to allow the instructor to clearly mark on the floor the positions candidates should stand, allowing the instructor to maximize visibility and understanding while maintaining social distancing.
- The make and model of the training MEWP, MCWP or hoist, allowing the candidate to search online, with mobile phone, the machine operating manual
- Hand sanitizer in the machine to allow the candidate to clean machine controls and their hands prior to and following use

End of IPAF training

Instructors must be informed of how to safely exit the site following site rules.

Useful links

[IPAF \(www.ipaf.org/covid19\)](http://www.ipaf.org/covid19)

Contact IPAF

T: 518-280-2486

E: info@ipaf.org

*COVID-19 Symptoms: Continuous cough or a fever OR self-isolating following Government advice.

**Candidates who refuse to wear additional PPE or follow the additional guidance including social distancing, should not be allowed to continue training. Training center should have sanitary PPE available for candidates that forget or bring inadequate PPE.