

NOVEMBER 2020

RETIRED WORKERS' CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope that you and your families are all doing well during these somewhat unusual times.

It goes without saying that COVID-19 has created difficulties for all of us and our families. Depending on where one lives the effects have varied. Overall, I suggest that PWU Retired Workers Chapter (RWC) members have navigated through the pandemic rather well and hopefully will continue to be safe and healthy.

At this time of year, many of us look forward to spending some time in warmer climates. Naturally, this year we all will face some major obstacles. We have included some articles in this edition of our newsletter which will provide you with some food for thought for your decision on whether you stay home or travel this winter.

As many of you are aware, all of our membership meetings were cancelled this year due to COVID-19. We are currently in a holding pattern for scheduling next year's meetings. We are also looking into the possibility of arranging some form of virtual meetings to interface with our members.

Our Executive Committee has been able to continue meeting in person, five persons or less, whilst observing the appropriate physical distancing protocols and the Executive Board has met, 17 persons or less, in order to maintain our operation.

Some good news is that our new website is being launched next month. Members will have quick access to our bulletins, directives, newsletters etc. Once the site goes live you will be notified. We would like your input on any additional information we should include on our site. Please send comments via email to rwc@pwu.ca.

hope that you find our newsletter interesting and helpful.
As always, your comments are welcome.

As the saying goes "we will get through this together".

Enjoy your winter and be safe.

Peter Kelly

President

PWU Retired Workers' Chapter



OUT OF PROVINCE/COUNTRY MEDICAL INSURANCE

Several travel insurance providers have recently started offering COVID-19 insurance, after dropping it in March when the pandemic began its global spread.

Some RWC members have travel insurance coverage through their former employers. Below is a summary to assist members when considering whether to buy travel insurance for themselves.

This summary is **not** intended to provide information to be relied upon in making a decision, but to consider when approaching an insurer regarding coverage. Coverage details may change without notice and are beyond the control of the RWC. Members considering a trip **must check with their insurer prior to any travel to confirm travel insurance coverage and to determine whether to purchase further coverage.**

"Members considering a trip must check with their insurer prior to any travel to confirm travel insurance coverage and to determine whether to purchase further coverage."

The following is the current status of Out of Province/Country Insurance with RSA and GSC, which is subject to change at any time without notice.

RSA Out of Province/Country Insurance

Subject to certain conditions, COVID-19 illnesses are covered for people with the OPG PWU and BP PWU plans. That is as of the date of this bulletin.

The regular provisions such as pre-existing conditions apply.

Prior to any travel members must check with RSA to ensure that you have adequate coverage.

Green Shield Canada

Initially, GSC would not provide coverage for out of country health costs related to COVID-19 for travellers. This policy was changed as of August 15, 2020. The following information is from the GSC web site:

Please note: All travel coverage responses apply to GSC's standard travel benefit. (They do not apply to the Sure Away travel plan which is a stand-alone, single-trip travel product that is purchased separately and is not part of a health benefits plan.)

Where can I access the latest travel updates specific to COVID-19?

First and foremost, we strongly encourage you to review the [official Government of Canada travel advisories](#), with the March 13 advisory stating to avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada until further notice. However, if you do decide to travel, it's important to understand your travel coverage and what's expected of you.

The official Government of Canada travel advisory (issued March 13), says to avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada until further notice – even with international borders starting to re-open. What does this mean for my travel coverage if I still choose to travel for non-essential/leisure purposes?

While we continue to view the Government advisory as the primary guideline, we understand that plan members will make their own choices around travelling. In these situations, we firmly believe that providing peace of mind is the right thing to do.

For that reason, your travel plan **may** include coverage for emergency medical expenses related to COVID-19 for the period **from August 15, 2020, through June 30, 2021**, up to the existing maximums and limitations within each plan.

This additional coverage will apply to all destinations globally – regardless of the COVID-19 travel advisory being in place or reason for travel (i.e. leisure, work, school) – and is subject to all other terms, conditions, and limitations of your benefits plan, including the requirement that you must be symptom-free, in good health, and that all pre-existing conditions must be stable for 90 days prior to departure.

Additionally, we encourage you to review the [Government of Canada travel information](#) for the latest updates, including travel advisories for other reasons, in addition to requirements upon your return to Canada.

If you do travel and COVID-19 symptoms arise, contact GSC Travel Assistance immediately for support. You can find the phone number on the back of your ID card (as well as on your electronic ID on GSC's mobile app). It is important to remember that travel coverage is for emergency treatment that cannot be delayed until you return to your home province.

What should I do if I experience COVID-19 symptoms ahead of upcoming travel?

Keep in mind that, per the [Government of Canada advisory](#), regardless of your health status, all non-essential travel to countries that are the subject of a travel advisory should be avoided. As with all pre-existing medical conditions, you may not be covered for medical treatment if you experience symptoms prior to travelling. Please refer to your benefit booklet for more details on pre-existing conditions/being "stable" to travel.

While all standard GSC travel plans will include coverage for emergency medical expenses related to COVID-19 from August 15, 2020 through June 30, 2021, the requirement to be symptom free, in good health, and that all pre-existing conditions must be stable for 90 days prior to departure, means that having COVID-19 symptoms ahead of travel will result in no travel coverage for COVID-19 related expenses.

Members with GSC coverage must review the GSC web site and/or contact GSC for current coverage before travelling.

Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP)

OHIP covers Ontario citizens in Ontario and across Canada, but of course, coverage is limited.

If you are not covered under an out of province/country EHB Plan and plan to travel to other provinces you should determine your coverage and decide if you require out of province coverage.

Earlier this year the Ford Government in Ontario announced it was ending out of country OHIP coverage. In September of this year, the Divisional Court held that such a change could not be made by regulation as the Ford government had purported to do. It's not clear whether the Ford government will pursue an appeal of the decision or simply decide to amend legislation to achieve the same end. In any event, members cannot rely on OHIP for adequate out of country coverage as, even when the coverage was in place, it provided extremely limited benefits for those travelling outside the country. Members intending to travel outside Canada must review the adequacy of any private coverage they have and consider purchasing further coverage before they travel.

OTHER Out of Province/Country Insurance

Coverage varies. Prior to travel, members must check with their insurer to ensure that they have adequate coverage.

The current status on travel advisories is available at:

<https://bit.ly/2z15RGa>



OMERS PENSION PLAN PROPOSED CHANGES

RWC members from the Utility Companies in Sector three are members of the OMERS Plan.

Changes to the plan under consideration are proposals for membership expansion to non-full-time employees, shared risk indexing proposals, pension contribution increases in the future etc. If approved any changes will come into effect on December 31, 2022.

For current retirees, nothing changes.

For more information on the proposed changes visit; www.mroo.org

COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE (COLA)

Ontario Hydro Successor Companies

Pension benefits for Pension Plan members of Ontario Hydro successor companies who immediately prior to termination of employment were members of the Power Workers' Union, will be increased on January 1st of each year by 100 percent of the increase in the Consumer Price Index, up to a maximum of 8 percent per year.

The COLA increase for January 1, 2021 will be .04 %.

This is based on the Ontario cost of living for the period of June 2019 to June 2020.

Hydro successor companies include the following:

Bruce Power, Kinetrics, Hydro One, OPG, NWMO, ESA and IESO

OMERS Retirees

The formula for COLA for these members will be posted in November. The COLA is based on the cost of living for the period of October 2019 to October 2020.



THINKING OF DOWNSIZING LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS



Many retirees begin to think of downsizing their residences. This may be a smaller home, a condo or other form of housing.

If you are considering moving to a condo this article may assist you with your decision. There are several perks to Condo living. The number one reason, maybe that somebody else is going to do the maintenance, cut the grass, fix the roof, shovel the snow etc. Then there is the security side of it, some condos are gated, or have security staff and a concierge. Then there are the amenities. Many condos have pools, club houses, fitness centers, guest rooms, common meeting rooms. This style of living is also a good way to meet others, especially if you live alone.

Condo living has positives and negatives. Downsizing into a Condo does not mean downsizing to a cheaper home. But is condo the life for you?

Many new Condo owners are surprised once they move into their new condo units that there are a lot of things they cannot do as well as being required to do. Yes, there are many benefits but there can also be unforeseen hassles.

So, condominium ownership, what you need to know. First and foremost is that you have purchased not just a unit but a shared interest in the common elements of a corporation. In

short, you have become part of a community of owners that make up the corporation. This shared ownership entails certain expectations from you as an owner. Trust me I found this out the hard way.

The first things to know are your documents:

- Condominium Act, 1998.
- Declaration
- By-laws
- Rules
- Policies

The last four documents are specific to your condo. These four documents will be similar but will vary from condo to condo. These documents govern the residents to make sure everyone is satisfied with this style of home ownership.

These are legal documents. They cover everything from condo fees, parking, remodeling restrictions, storage, pets, governance, and describe what the common elements are. Make sure you are comfortable with them, if not condo life may not be for you.

Non-compliance can result in extra administrative costs assigned to you as well as liens placed on your unit as well as eviction. So, before you decide to purchase, ask for a Status Certificate (make sure to find out if there have been any modifications made to the unit, if so, make sure that they are documented), by the way, the cost cannot exceed \$100.00. You may also want to have an agent that specializes in Condo Real estate or a lawyer to help you judge the impact documents may have on you.

The reason is simple, the issues are not as simple as those are with a traditional home purchase.

The next thing to consider is Condo Fees.

They cover the cost of maintenance, repairs to common elements, recreation room, pool, workshops, elevators, and management fees (unless your condo is self-managed). A portion also goes to the reserve fund. This is a fund used to do major repair and replacement of common elements and assets – it is mandatory for all condo corporations. You should get a copy of this with the Status Certificate.

Depending on the type of Condo you purchase these fees can vary from a few hundred dollars to a thousand dollars per month. It is advisable to check on the history of increases and the reason for them. Also, ask if there have been any special assessments. These generally occur in the event of an unforeseen event occurs that was not budgeted for. It is becoming more difficult for condos to get insurance coverage and as well the costs are going up. So be sure to check on the insurance coverage. To mitigate this cost some corporations are transferring some of the insured perils to the unit owners.

As you now know if you purchase a condo unit you are part of a corporation, as such, it needs a Board of Directors. Their duties are outlined in the Condominium Act. Their function is managing the affairs of the corporation and enforcing its governing documents. In a self-managed corporation, they also perform management functions.

Now more and more corporations are hiring Property Management firms to do that part of the work because of the ever-increasing complexities and difficulties in getting volunteers for the Board. Of course, this comes with an added cost depending on the size of the condo and duties they are to perform. Their cost could easily be anywhere from \$30.00 to \$80.00 per unit per month. Also, even though there is a management firm the corporation still needs a Board.

I hope this information has gotten you thinking before jumping in to buy a Condo. The key is to do your due diligence as the above does not cover all the aspects of condo living. There are many websites that can provide you with needed information that will help you decide if Condo living is right for you.

Fred Hansen OPG Retiree



EXTENDED HEALTH BENEFITS PLAN (EHB)

IMPROVED BENEFITS FOR HYDRO ONE RWC WORKERS

The PWU recently ratified a new collective agreement with Hydro One on Oct. 6, 2020. EHB plan improvements are as follows and as per the collective agreement, these improvements apply to Hydro One retirees.

- Fertility Drugs:
 - **Remove the one-year restriction**
- Dental:
 - **Implant coverage up to maximum coverage for a bridge**
- Psychologists:
 - Increase coverage from \$2,500 for psychologist to **\$3000.00** annually
 - Add **Occupational Therapy and Behavioral Training for Autism**

The parties agree to meet and discuss the current issues with access to addictions rehabilitation treatment programs.

The parties agree to jointly develop an updated Health and Dental Brochure.

RWC EXECUTIVE BOARD CHANGES



At the last Executive Board meeting held on October 14, Sector 3 Vice President, Earl Evans, stepped down. Earl has been an active member of the RWC since his retirement in 2001. During his years of Union involvement, he was very active with the New Liskeard Labour Council. He was a long term PWU Chief Steward and PWU Executive Board member. Earl was a Power Line Maintainer with Hydro One in the New Liskeard area.

Adrian Zanchetta was elected to the Sector Three Vice President position. Prior to retirement, Adrian was a PWU Chief Steward in the Windsor Area and He was a PC Technician with Hydro One.

Lori Knight, Executive Board Member Sector 2 also resigned at the October meeting. Lori, an OPG retiree served on the board for 6 years.

The RWC is currently proceeding via the process to fill the 2 board member vacancies.

RETIREES VIEW ON ACTIVITIES DURING COVID-19

Many activities of retired PWU members have been curtailed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the various phases of COVID, members were often restricted to basic activities. Some of those basics may have been a trip to the grocery store or to attend an urgent medical appointment. When retirees needed to go out of their homes, they reminded themselves to wear a mask, frequent hand washing and keeping a social distance of 2 metres from each other.



Keeping mentally and physically active during this COVID period has proven more difficult for many of us retirees. Seniors, like many other people, are worried about their health and their loved ones. Due to COVID-19 isolation, feelings of depression and loneliness can emerge. Many of us may experience changes to sleep and eating patterns while others increase their consumption of alcohol and tobacco.



There are many things that retirees can do to keep active during this COVID-19 period. If you walk, then keep on walking. Challenge yourself to walk a little further every day and do not forget your partner. Change the setting for your walk to a park or a nature trail. If you subscribe to a newspaper and have never done a Crossword or Sudoku puzzle give it a try. Do you have a bicycle? Then go for a spin, a change of scenery will do you good. Explore a conservation or park area near you and check out the autumn colours. Set up a date night with your partner and go to a drive-in movie.



Social media today offers so many ways to keep in touch with people. Increase your contact with family and friends by giving them a call via social media. Start a Zoom and invite friends and family to join and agree to meet once a week. Learn a new photo app on your computer and organize your digital photos into albums. Build a toy for your grandchild. Planning to travel to a non-English speaking country, try learning some of the language basics of that country before you visit. Speaking of travel, visit the great museums of the world in London, Berlin, Rome, and Washington through their virtual tours. You will be surprised by what you see and learn.

At the time of this bulletin's printing, Ontario remains in Phase 3 guidelines of COVID-19. The Ontario Government allows people in the province to build "social circles" of up to 10 people that include family and friends. You can also dine out now under controlled seating at a restaurant. Whether it is a trip to the corner store, or your bubble of 10 people follows Health Canada guidelines regarding the COVID-19. Stay safe and let's beat this virus together.

Adrian Zanchetta - Hydro One Retiree

AIR TRAVEL BASICS

Most of us can remember the glory days of flying when inflight service was good, there was space to relax, and the flight experience was enjoyable.

Cheap flights changed all of that. Many small discount airlines began to appear offering cheap flights. The public started booking their flights with these small startup airlines. Some of these airlines did not last long where others survived. Many of these air carriers specialized in the vacation destinations to the warmer climates. Some of them expanded to other domestic and international routes.

How were new airlines able to reduce the price of flights? Most large airlines are unionized. The startup airlines were non-union, so they were able to pay lower wages. Airlines' income is derived from passengers, so the new players increased the number of passengers on their planes. For example, on a cut-rate airline, there may be fifty or more seats than on the same plane operated by a large carrier. Services were cut. Luggage fees were charged resulting in more carry on which creates less space. These changes resulted in full planes with cheaper fares than the big airlines.

To compete, the larger airlines had to look at ways to reduce fares. Similar service reductions were introduced which also resulted in deteriorated space and service. Most large carriers created a parallel airline. In Canada, Air Canada, created Rouge and West Jet has Swoop. These airlines service the same routes as the smaller airlines and offer similar prices for tickets.



PURCHASING TICKETS

For the past several years people have been booking flights online. Most passengers have been looking for the cheapest fares possible. Looking for flights online can be very frustrating at times. Prices can change by the hour and the day. Airlines try to get the best flight cost for them whereas passengers are looking for the best price they can get. It appears that airline ticketing programs can determine when passengers are looking at flights and do not book, the next time the passenger searches for the flight the price has increased. Prices also vary by what is happening in the departure location as well as the arrival location. For example, if there is a major conference happening at either your departure or arrival location prices will be increased due to the demand. Last December an outbound flight from Toronto to Atlanta mid-week was in the \$300.00 range on the departing flight whereas the return flight was in the \$700.00 range. The reason being that there was a large conference ending on the Friday in Atlanta and the demand for seats was very high hence the airline could get a higher price. A cheaper flight was available two days later, but the cost of a hotel and meals for 2 days far exceeded the additional increased airfare. This pricing can be seen by looking at the same flights for different weeks.

Prices also vary by the day of the week. Tuesdays seem to be cheaper. Also, time of day will also play a role in pricing. Direct flights usually are more expensive than multi-stop flights. Airlines know that there will be an increased demand for flights to the warmer locations in November so

they know that they can sell seats at a higher price. The same prices apply in March/April when snowbirds are returning home. A similar pricing schedule occurs during the summer vacation period. The more flexible a passenger is regarding departure and return the better the opportunity to acquire a lower price. Normally the earlier you book the better your chances of a cheaper flight.

So, once you have decided to book you will probably be faced with a decision on which fare schedule to choose. The lowest price flights are as the saying goes bare bone. Most airlines have several fare categories each offering perks. The lowest base fare normally offers no refund, or no expensive flight change fees, costs for luggage, costs for seat selection, etc. If everything works perfectly the base fare will work out as a bargain but if things go wrong (for example March 2020) the lowest fare may be disastrous. For example, if you are away and have to return home prior to your departure date, depending on the fare category it may cost you a lot. There are only so many seats allotted to each category and the basic fare seats are normally all sold. So if you have the base fare ticket you may have to pay a fare change fee plus if there are no seats available in that fare category you may have to pay for a higher category fare. If you have a higher category fare you can bump down at no additional costs. Many passengers got caught on this arrangement in March 2020, but it also occurs at normal times as well. You may fare better when the flight change is as a result of the airline. Other perks for a more costly ticket can include meals, better seating, better flight change options, etc.

Normally, except for full-fare tickets, airlines do not provide refunds for cancelled flights. Instead, they provide vouchers for future travel. Due to the pandemic back in March, there were many cancelled flights and passengers are still seeking refunds. At the time of writing WestJet Airlines has agreed to provide some refunds but Air Canada is still only providing vouchers. The Canadian Government earlier this year passed legislation requiring airlines to compensate passengers in some situations for cancelled and delayed flights.

AIRLINE LOYALTY PROGRAMS

Airline Loyalty Programs are designed to attract business. For each flight, you gain points that are good for free flights. Most airlines have a loyalty program. Some of these programs allow you to gain points by making purchases at other participating partner businesses. These programs work best for frequent flyers. Besides getting points/miles for flights, frequent flyers receive other perks depending on the number of flights they accumulate. Additional perks start at 25,000 miles per year. Perks vary with the flyer's status. Status levels are 25k, 59k, 75k, & 100K plus miles flown. Members have to requalify for status levels each year. Perks include upgrades to business class, priority boarding, priority check-in, free baggage, standby priority, access to airline lounges, priority for free flights, etc. All loyalty plan members accumulate miles toward flights. Most loyalty plans are similar. The one explained here is an overview of Air Canada's Aeroplan Program.



Other plans for acquiring points for flights are Air Miles, several Credit Cards offer a point system as well.

Free flights start at about 10k miles. Getting a flight you want can be a challenge at times. There are only so many loyalty plan seats available on flights. Changing flights can be a challenge when flying on a point's system ticket.

TRAVEL AGENTS VS BOOKING YOUR OWN FLIGHTS

The majority of leisure travellers book their own flights online. Travel agents are far and few between. They are a casualty in the drive for cheaper seats. At one time, airlines provided travel agents with a commission for the flights they booked. This cost was included in the ticket price so when the airline did away with the commission the seat prices went down. Now travel agents charge the customer the commission which can be in the \$25.00 - \$60.00 range. Travel agents do not normally charge a fee for hotels, package holidays, cruises etc. Travel agents are very familiar with travel and can be a big benefit and can be very helpful with acquiring flights etc. They are very useful especially for arranging flight changes, flight cancellations etc.

TRAVELLING DURING THE PANDEMIC

Today during the pandemic all airlines are suffering. News reports indicate that flights have been reduced by 94%. The future of small airlines as well as large international airlines are in jeopardy. People are still flying for business and pleasure but in very limited numbers. Airports are very quiet, very clean, and COVID19 protocols are strictly enforced. The Canadian Government is still encouraging people to travel only if essential. Recent travellers will say that it is the best time to fly for several reasons.

Aircraft are very clean and cleaned regularly. Flight attendants are in full PPE. Service is limited to the box lunch format. All passengers must wear masks and temperatures are checked prior to boarding. Earlier in the pandemic middle seats were vacant but are now being utilized. Most flights are full due to the limited number of flights.

FLYING IN THE FUTURE

Experts are predicting that it will take 4 – 5 years for people to start flying again as they did in the past. No one knows for sure.

Business travel is and will be reduced as more companies will utilize Zoom, etc formats for meetings.

Many airlines will disappear. With less competition and the requirement for more space between passengers resulting in fewer passengers on airplanes, seat prices are predicted to increase.

More people will utilize travel agents.

We will all travel again. When will be an individual decision all depending on the individual's needs and people's risk tolerance level.

This article is for general information purposes and it is suggested that everyone do their own research and due diligence on planning flights.

OPG/PWU Retiree & past frequent flyer.

TRAVEL AND VACATIONS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Many, not all, RWC members are considering their winter travel plans.

For some retirees, the norm is they spend the winter in warmer climate areas and the remainder of the year in Canada. They have a variety of living arrangements. These arrangements consist of winter home ownership, condominiums, RV living, trailer resorts, rental accommodations etc. Each of these situations creates different dilemmas for retirees this year.

It is relatively easy for some to just stay in Canada but for others it is difficult.

For example, some RV owners live in their RV's. These folks found it difficult when they had to return home in March this year as the RV resorts here were not open until May. On the flip side, these resorts close after Thanksgiving. Some will choose the option of paying to ship their RV south and then fly to their destination.



Others live at their cottage most of the year and go south for the winter. Some of these cottages are 3 season cottages and are not accessible during the winter months and therefore not equipped for winter living.

Some retirees rent out their Canadian homes for the winter. Getting out of rental agreements can create issues.

People with homes, Condos, trailers, rentals in the warmer climates also have the option of flying to their destination as with the border currently closed, they cannot drive their vehicles. Naturally, this creates issues with not having a vehicle at their winter residence. Many people are planning on driving once and when the Canada/USA border reopens.

Another big issue for snowbirds is that they have not experienced a Canadian winter in years. They do not have winter clothes, winter tires etc. The government is still recommending against all [travel outside of Canada](#).

While destinations across the world are [reopening to tourists](#), the Canadian government is still advising residents to stay at home.

In [a notice](#) on October 1, the government wrote, "Today we remind Canadians, including #snowbirds, that we advise against all non-essential travel outside Canada and all cruise ship travel outside [Canada] until further notice."

Despite all of this Government advice, it is still legal for you to leave Canada regardless of the reason for your trip. Airlines are still flying, and seats are available.

This means you can legally leave Canada to go to another country, regardless of the reason for your trip. However, you will be required to self-quarantine upon your return. Also, some countries will require travellers to self-isolate on their arrival. It is suggested that travellers check on the entry requirements for the country they plan to visit.

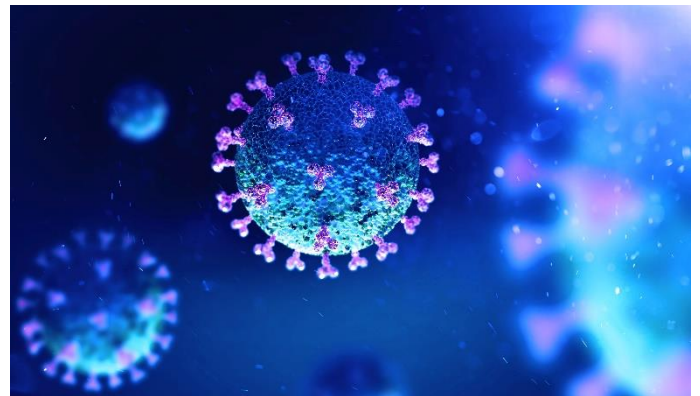
Airlines and resorts are offering enticing prices for Canadians to travel and vacation in sunny climates. Those considering these types of escapes should strongly consider Trip Cancellation Insurance.

Some snowbirds will travel south. They believe that they can stay in their winter homes safely utilizing the same COVID-19 precautions that they practice in Canada. The travel decision is an individual decision based on risk level tolerance.

A very important consideration for travelling is the status of out of province/country medical insurance.

THE PWU AND COVID-19

For most of 2020, the entire world has been consumed by the ebb and flow of a global pandemic. When public health experts are consulted the pandemic is not exactly a surprise. Such a seminal moment in human history as COVID-19 or the coronavirus had been feared and predicted for some time and even forewarned of by other public health events over recent decades. As the time of Spanish flu of 1918, we are witness to history, but we will always be of sad heart as we think of those who have been made ill, those suffering lingering adverse health effects and those who have passed away due to this virus.



Across the fifty or so workplaces where the PWU has members, it is not by accident that self-isolations, assumed infections and actual COVID-19 infections have been exceptionally low. The PWU H&S department worked closely with the PWU Pandemic team from the earliest days of the pandemic. Since then there has been constant contact with the PWU Executive. As an organization, we have sought out the best possible information available in helping to advise the various facets of our Union.

Taking the initiative to adopt and even exceed public health and expert advice the PWU, PWU H&S department, H&S Representatives, Chief Stewards, Principal Stewards and Stewards all stepped up to make a difference in our workplaces. Early JHSC engagement was critical to overall success.

Workplaces, where PWU members work, have not been spared completely from COVID-19 infections, but the numbers have been low. Most of us already know the basic public health advice to minimize the spread, or “flatten the curve”. A few examples of enhancements beyond what most of us already know have been adopted across a variety of workplaces where our members work.

- Plexiglass barriers between workstations or desks
- A shift process such that, for example, fifty percent of the staff to return at one time. Some staff would work from home while some staff would be in the workplace. These segments of the staff would rotate between working from home and in the workplace
- Limiting washroom occupancy while disabling some facilities so that if more than one person were permitted in the washroom there would be no such thing as adjacent facilities/fixtures
- Drinking fountains have been disabled
- Like many stores, one-way traffic or lanes would be established
- Mandatory face masks when six feet of physical distance is not possible and constant usage of hand sanitizer
- Limiting corporate vehicle occupancy to one person if possible, but if not possible maintaining work cohorts to limit exposure, plus mandatory face masks or coverings
- In at least one location car pooling was stopped with only those traveling from the same household being permitted to have multiple passengers in one vehicle
- The Bruce Site bus service was discontinued
- Aggressive cleaning of all common services
- Infection tracking processes established
- Zoom, Microsoft Teams and WebEx virtual meetings are used for a vast array of needs. Including meetings and, where possible, training
- In-person training is limited to ensure adequate social and physical distancing is maintained

With schools opening and the economy continuing to demand more and more workers return to work the situation is dynamic. The PWU is profoundly proud of their work to bring mental, emotional, and psychological health and safety to the centre stage. Conditions change every day in this world of uncertainty. This accelerates the need for ensuring the mental, psychological, and emotional health and safety of our members. With this in mind, a key piece of PWU strategy is making sure that these items are on the H&S agenda across our membership.



We wish all of you good health.

David Trumble - Bruce Power/PWU Retiree

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