COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

Implemented: June 24, 2020

Nine Mile Creek Watershed District (NMCWD) is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff. To ensure that, we have developed the following Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Managers and staff are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces, and that requires full cooperation among staff and management. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our staff and workplaces.

NMCWD staff are responsible for implementing and complying with all aspects of this Preparedness Plan. NMCWD’s Administrator is in full support of enforcing the provisions of this policy.

Our staff are our most important assets. We are serious about safety and health and keeping our staff working at NMCWD. Worker involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID19 Preparedness Plan. The Preparedness Plan was drafted by the Administrator and will be updated as guidance and regulations changes.

Our Preparedness Plan follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines and federal OSHA standards related to COVID-19 and addresses:

- hygiene and respiratory etiquette;
- engineering and administrative controls for social distancing;
- housekeeping – cleaning, disinfecting and decontaminating;
- prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- communications and training that will be provided to managers and
- management and supervision necessary to ensure effective implementation of the plan

Screening and policies for staff exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

Staff have been informed of and required to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess staff health status prior to entering the workplace and for staff to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.
Staff must conduct wellness checks, including taking their temperature, prior to coming to work at the office or in the field. If their temperature is at or above 100 degrees F, or they exhibit a cough or shortness of breath, they must remain at home and report their temperature and other symptoms to their supervisor. Staff with any of these symptoms will be required to stay at home for at least 7 days, and for 3 days with no fever and improvement of respiratory symptoms, whichever is longer. If you have any new symptoms (sore throat, diarrhea, muscle aches, headache), stay home until symptoms resolve. If staff has a family member or close contact with someone(s) who is sick or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, the staff member must stay at home and report their absence to their supervisor. If staff are sick or experience symptoms while at work, staff must inform the District Administrator and go home immediately.

NMCWD has implemented leave policies that promote staff staying at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when required by a health care provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household. NMCWD’s paid time off and employee leave policy is described in the NMCWD Employee Policy Manual.

NMCWD will also implement a policy for informing staff if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at their workplace and requiring them to quarantine for the required amount of time. NMCWD will, to the extent possible, inform staff if they have been exposed to a co-worker with COVID-19 and all individuals exposed along with the positive COVID-19 person must remain in quarantine for 14 days. In addition, a policy has been implemented to protect the privacy of staff members’ health status and health information. All staff health status and health information will be kept confidential.

When a staff member tests positive for COVID 19, deep-cleaning procedures will be triggered. Furthermore, staff who have been in close contact with the individual who has tested positive for COVID 19 will be instructed to self-quarantine.

**Handwashing**

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our workplaces at all times. Staff are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their shift, prior to any mealtimes and after using the toilet. All visitors to the facility will be required to wash their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility. Some workplaces may have hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) that can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled. Staff will have access to restrooms that will provide soap, water and paper towels. Hand sanitizer is also available in the office as well as NMCWD vehicles which can be used in place of soap and water. Staff are strongly encouraged to wash or sanitize their hands regularly. After each engagement with a visitor at the NMCWD Office, staff will clean/sanitize the workplace area and wash their hands. Sanitizing supplies will be available in key locations around the office (i.e. entrances/exits) and the District vehicle.

**Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze**

All staff should have personal masks available to wear under certain circumstances.
Staff (and when necessary, visitors) are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in the trash and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated in policies and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all staff and visitors. All staff will be informed, in writing, of the respiratory etiquette described above. Staff should wear a cloth mask from home if they are sneezing frequently.

Social distancing

Social distancing is being implemented in the workplace through the following administrative controls: Staff shall continue to work from home if their job duties allow them to work remotely. If staff must work in the office, they should schedule time in the office and inform the District Administrator. Staff must work from their workstation and comply with social distancing requirements. Except when deemed necessary, no public or partner meetings are allowed in the building. The building is to remain locked at all times. Excepted when deemed necessary, no more than one person is allowed in common/public spaces that do not allow social distancing (e.g., the kitchen) and must be sanitized between uses. All staff and visitors must maintain social distancing when in the workplace. This means, maintaining at least a six-foot distance from all staff at all times. In the event staff cannot maintain the minimum six-foot distance, cloth masks must be worn. When at workstations, staff may only work together when sitting diagonally and not across or adjacent to one another in a configuration that allows for a six-foot distance between staff members. Whenever possible, open/close doors with your sleeve or elbow. Only one person at a time in the copy room. Only one person may use the District vehicle or (personal vehicle while conducting district work) at a time. Passengers are not allowed. Staff must disinfect the vehicle after each use if they are to be used by others within 48 hours Disinfection includes wiping down or cleaning all surfaces that the staff member come in contact with during its use.

Staff are prohibited from gathering in groups and confined areas and from using other staff’ personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, workstations, or other personal work tools and equipment.

In addition, while working in the field (including monitoring, site and BMP inspections and BMP maintenance) staff must make all attempts to maintain a distance of six feet between one another.

While in the field where washing hands is not possible, staff should make use of hand sanitizer frequently. Staff must use their own personal protection equipment (e.g., hardhats, vests, safety glasses, gloves, and boots, etc.) to avoid cross contamination. When possible communicate your expected arrival to a site via phone or email. Do not enter job trailers or other buildings. If a group on-site meeting is necessary, maintain six-foot separation at all times. Review inspection findings and or reports with site personnel via phone or email. When leaving the site, sanitize hands prior to entering the vehicle and wipe down mobile inspection device and other equipment as needed.

Housekeeping

Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, tools and machinery, and areas in the work environment, including restrooms, the pantry, and meeting rooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in high
touch areas, such as phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, door handles, railings, copy machines, etc. Any commonly used or high touch surfaces, including restrooms, copier, exterior doors, security systems, lights/blinds, trash receptacles, public spaces, must be cleaned immediately after use with disinfectant spray or wipes provided by the District. Last one out will wipe down all door handles.

Communications and training

NMCWD’s COVID-19 Response and Preparedness Plan was communicated via email to all staff on June 29, 2020 and necessary training was provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing including weekly emails to all staff and provided to all staff who did not receive the initial training. The Administrator will monitor how effective the program has been implemented by staff. This will be communicated during weekly staff meetings. Management and staff are to implement this new program together and update the training, as necessary. This Preparedness Plan has been certified by NMCWD management and was posted throughout the workplace on June 29, 2020. It will be updated, as necessary.

Certified by:

Randy Anhorn
District Administrator

**Purpose:** This is intended to document the policies, procedures, and communications/trainings as referenced in the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

**Communication/Training:** Staff have been informed of and required to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

- Communication of this requirement and procedures for self-monitoring outlined in the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will be tracked via employee acknowledgement over email.

**Communication/Training:** All staff will be informed, in writing, of the respiratory etiquette described [in COVID-19 Preparedness Plan].

- Communication of this requirement regarding respiratory etiquette as outlined in the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will be tracked via employee acknowledgement over email.

**Policy:** NMCWD will also implement a policy for informing staff if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at their workplace and requiring them to quarantine for the required amount of time.

- If an exposure at the workplace is known, the exposed employee will be informed by the Administrator via phone within two hours of learning of a confirmed or suspected infection.
- If the Administrator has a suspected or confirmed infection, all employees with which he/she has had contact within the maximum incubation period will be informed.
  - According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the incubation period can extend up to 14 days.
- Tracking NMCWD employees and contractors with which an NMCWD employee has had in-person contact is the responsibility of each employee. Knowing the date and person(s) with
which an individual has come into contact will inform which people are informed if an infection is confirmed or suspected.

Policy: A policy has been implemented to protect the privacy of staff members’ health status and health information.

- All staff health status and health information will be kept confidential.
- Each staff member who is informed of another’s health status is required to keep all health information confidential, unless explicitly told to pass on information.
  - If allowed, an employee must only tell the person(s) that the employee with COVID-19 specifies.
- Health information about an individual must not be sent over email or any other internet-using messaging function.

Policy: Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated in policies and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all staff and visitors.

- Respiratory etiquette policy requirements are outlined in the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.
- Tissues will be available near the front door and in the NMCWD board room, at a minimum.
- Trash receptacles are available in the kitchen area, each bathroom, in the board room, and near the drinking fountain. These receptacles will remain in place throughout the time this plan is in effect.

Procedure: When a staff member tests positive for COVID 19, deep-cleaning procedures will be triggered.

- Deep-cleaning will include (but is not limited to) the following activities:
  - Sanitization of door handles
  - Sanitization of all commonly touched surfaces, such as faucet handles, refrigerator handle, coffee/tea makers, dishwasher handle and controls
  - Sanitization of all surfaces at which the infected employee worked
- Sanitizing must be done with disinfection wipes such as Lysol or Clorox, or a solution with bleach suitable for disinfection mixed according to CDC guidelines: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html
- Employee sanitizing must wear rubber or neoprene gloves, or Personal Protective Equipment according to the specific chemical’s Safety Data Sheet
- Employee sanitizing must follow all other manufacturer’s instructions for the chemicals used and PPE used