

Please note – the current, swiftly-changing advice from the Government supersedes any recommendations here. See covid19.govt.nz

To minimize the possibility of COVID 19 workplace exposures, RANZ offers the following recommendations:

- If you do not do so already, consider receiving, conveying and executing all project documents electronically. This includes invoices, orders and all internal and external project communications and documents.
- For all your employees, consider instituting a work practice that requires them to be vigilant regarding sufficient distancing from other employees. Office staff may need to be moved to increase desk or cubicle space from others. Shared equipment and tools must be disinfected regularly, and dedicated tools and equipment may need to be provided to workers.
- For sales and estimating staff, consider determining whether drone or satellite services can provide the necessary measurement data required for quote/tender submittals so job-site visits are reduced or eliminated.
- For workshop and office staff, consider restricting third-party access to your company buildings. Have deliveries off-loaded to a secure area such as a parking lot adjacent to your warehouse if the delivery driver unloads the material – do not permit third-party delivery personnel into your buildings. If your employees unload material deliveries, have them wear protective clothing, including gloves, and have the delivery driver remain in the vehicle while the truck is unloaded. Inform suppliers that materials will be signed for electronically if a signature is necessary. For mail and parcel delivery, install a secure, dedicated mailbox or dropbox at your office, or arrange for mail to go to a P.O. Box.
- Job-site access to buildings by your workers likely will be similarly restricted by building owners. Determine whether exterior ladder access, scaffold stairways and/or aerial lifts are options for certain projects, eliminating contact with interior building areas and occupants. If that is not possible, suggest to building owners a dedicated access, hallways and/or stairwells be established for your workers that can be secured and protected by appropriate means.
- Consider informing customers that in-person communication between your company's workers and your customer's employees increases the possibility of spreading the virus.
- Establish an electronic communication protocol among your customers, your office and the job-site foreman and/or crew leader to eliminate any such in-person contact.
- Consider having repair and service crews that normally operate as two-person crews wear appropriate respirators, which offer added protection while in vehicles and other areas of close proximity. These workers may face increased hazard of infection because of a shared work vehicle and closer work activities.
- Evaluate workers who may work alone because they have unique challenges. Their risk of being infected may be lessened by the fact that they would not have contact with a co-worker or customer, but keeping track of their condition and the well-being while they are working alone can be difficult for any employer. You may want to consider monitors or tracking devices that allow checking on a worker regularly or requiring regular interval check-in or text messages.
- Company utes and vans taking workers to sites may increase hazards of exposure that may be reduced by disinfecting common areas, supplying gloves, wearing respirators while in company vehicles and/or increasing the number of trips so there are fewer riders per trip.

Remember there are various levels of anxiety out there and you need to allow for this when working with your people.

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