

Guidance on fueling of vehicles during COVID-19

Overview

This is not a legal document and employers are advised to seek legal advice.

Employers and constructors have obligations to protect workers from hazards in the workplace as set out in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and its regulations and the directives coming from the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Workers should raise any concerns to their:

- Supervisor
- Joint health and safety committee
- Health and safety representative

This will help ensure the employer has taken all reasonable precautions.

Ontario is currently in the midst of a global pandemic. While the COVID-19 situation is changing rapidly, the legislation and regulations used to govern Ontario's workplaces are not.

Under Ontario law, employers have the duty to keep workers and work sites safe and free of hazards. Workers have the right to refuse unsafe work. If health and safety concerns are not resolved internally, a worker can seek enforcement by filing a complaint with the ministry's Health and Safety Contact Centre at 1-877-202-0008. Failure of the employer or constructor to comply with the OHSA and its regulations could result in a stop-work order upon inspection by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development.

Recognize hazards and assess risks

How does the coronavirus spread? The virus typically spreads through coughing and sneezing, personal contact with an infected person, or touching an infected surface and then the mouth, nose, or eyes.

Potential exposures when fuelling a vehicle:

- The pump handle/nozzle, payment keypad, squeegee, and other surfaces may be contaminated, especially in busy areas where there is a lot of traffic at the station.
- The entry door and countertop of the building may be contaminated. The payment keypad inside the building is used often and is also a potential source of contamination.
- Washrooms in the facility are used by the general public and all surfaces should be assumed to be a source of contamination including the entry door, sink, and tap.
- Lottery-ticket kiosk surfaces and pens/pencils are also potential sources of contamination.
- Close contact with other people during fuelling increases risk of exposure to someone who may be infected.

Controls

1. **Maintain physical distancing.** Physical distancing generally means maintaining a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) or more between persons. By maintaining physical distancing, you are less likely to be exposed to a respiratory virus.
2. **Fuel stop procedures.** Cleaning methods should be employed with special attention to certain areas as specified below:
 - Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) from the moment you leave the

- cab of the vehicle. Make sure to wear gloves at all times or have hand sanitizer available to ensure proper hygiene after handling any equipment or making contact with surfaces.
- If using a shared vehicle, wipe down the gas cap before removal.
- Wipe down the pump handle and any other parts of the fuel-dispensing equipment (e.g., screen and touch pad) you may be required to touch with disinfectant wipes.
- Make payment through remote means where possible to limit exposure to other people inside the fuel station.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Once the fuel stop is complete, remove gloves and ensure you wash your hands or use hand sanitizer.
- If going into the building to pay and making contact with surfaces, upon return to vehicle, use hand sanitizer immediately.

3. **Practise Good Hygiene.** Health Canada recommends following these basic hygiene practices:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If using hand sanitizers, they must be alcohol based (with greater than 60% alcohol) to be effective.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue and discard it, or cough into your elbow or sleeve.

Evaluate

Review your activities during fuel stops and over time and look for opportunities to improve your processes. Evaluate your cleaning and sanitizing processes to identify any issues (availability of product, effectiveness of product, disposal of materials, etc.). Communicate or report any changes needed or any new issues as they arise to your supervisor for input and support.

Monitor your supplies. You may be on long routes, so monitor your supply of disinfectant wipes, products, and PPE (gloves) to ensure you have sufficient supplies for your trip.

Stay home if you are feeling ill. If you detect symptoms, you should immediately distance yourself from others and go home. If possible, avoid using public transit. Ensure you notify your supervisor so that they are aware of the situation and can also notify others who may have been exposed.

For Ontario residents, anyone who suspects that they have contracted COVID-19 should call 811 (NOT 911) instead of going to the hospital or a family doctor. Direct toll-free phone numbers for Ontario residents are: 1-866-797-0000 or TTY: 1-866-797-0007. Visit the Ontario Ministry of Health's website and taking their [self-assessment](#).

Resources

Stay updated with daily government updates on COVID-19:

- [Government of Ontario](#)
- [Government of Canada](#)
- [Public Health Ontario](#)