

## **UPDATED January 13, 2021**

### Guidance to Regions Regarding Inspections during the COVID19 Outbreak – January 13, 2021

ESA's response team has been working diligently to address the emerging issues. We are moving into circumstances that will require us to focus on the highest safety and related priorities of the province, while protecting our staff and the public

#### What ESA is Doing:

##### 1. Priorities for Inspections

ESA will continue to inspect the installations specified in the Government of Ontario guidance to the province January 12, 2021 for construction projects deemed essential, and that list includes:

- Construction projects and services associated with the healthcare sector and long-term care, including
- New facilities, expansions, renovations and conversion of spaces that could be repurposed for health care space.
- Construction projects and services required to ensure safe and reliable operations of, or to provide new capacity in, provincial infrastructure, including transit, transportation, energy, mining and justice sectors beyond the day-to-day maintenance.
- Construction projects and services that support the operations of, and provide new capacity in schools, colleges, universities, municipal infrastructure and child care centres within the meaning of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.
- Construction projects under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program
- Construction projects and services that support the operations of Broadband internet and cellular technologies and services.
- Critical industrial construction activities required for, the maintenance and operations of:
  - petrochemical plants and refineries,
  - significant industrial petrochemical projects where preliminary work has already commenced,
  - industrial construction and modifications to existing industrial structures limited solely to work necessary for the production, maintenance, and/or enhancement of Personal Protective Equipment, medical devices (such as ventilators), and other identified products directly related to combatting the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Construction projects that are due to be completed before July 2021 and that would provide additional capacity in the production, processing, manufacturing or distribution of food, beverages or agricultural products.
- Construction projects that were commenced before January 12, 2021 and that would provide additional capacity for businesses that provide logistical support, distribution services, warehousing, storage or shipping and delivery services, or provide additional capacity in the operation and delivery of Information Technology (IT) services or telecommunications services.
- Residential construction projects where:
  - a footing permit has been granted for single-family, semi-detached and townhomes
  - the project is a condominium, mixed-use or other residential building, or
  - the project involves renovations to residential properties and construction work was started before January 12, 2021.
- Construction to prepare a site for an institutional, commercial, industrial or residential development, including any necessary excavation, grading, roads or utilities infrastructure.
- Construction and maintenance activities necessary to temporarily close construction sites that have paused or are not active and to ensure ongoing public safety.

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- Below-grade multi-unit residential construction projects, such as apartments and condominiums. The Ontario government also provided that businesses must follow public health measures and should review the workplace safety guidelines.
  - Construction on any project intended to provide either,
    - affordable housing, or
    - shelter or supports for vulnerable persons,
  - If the project is being funded in whole or in part by, or is being undertaken by, any of the following:
    - the Crown in right of Canada or in right of Ontario,
    - an agency of the Crown in right of Canada or in right of Ontario,
    - a municipality,
    - a service manager as defined in the Housing Services Act, 2011, or
    - a registered charity and not for profit within the meaning of the Income Tax Act(Canada).
  - Connection authorizations, organized through Licensed Electrical Contractors so people can receive electrical service from their Local Distribution Company
  - Disconnect and Holds, organized by Licensed Electrical Contractors and known in the industry as a “Disconnect and Hold”. This will allow Local Distribution Companies to facilitate service upgrades, emergency panel changes and service repairs
  - Non Contractor notifications will not be scheduled until the lockdown restrictions are lifted in the area. Customers will be instructed to call once the lockdown has been lifted to schedule the inspection
2. Access Arranged appointments – ESA will notify these customers/clients directly that dedicated appointments will not be available and the Inspector will visit sometime through the day, provided the site does meet the exclusions set out below
3. As an essential service, physical site visits can still take place, however to ensure the safety of both Inspectors and the public, ESA may also use a wide range of options to both allow business to continue, exercise their authority and conduct inspections in the coming days and weeks.
- Pass without a visit as directed and guided by our Best Business Practices
  - Sampling tools in RBO
  - Photos
  - Videos – live or recorded
  - Instead of visiting a facility or dwelling, our Inspector meets the LEC performing the work at a safe location to review pictures, videos and any other available evidence to give the Inspector comfort regarding the state of electrical safety for the site or installation
  - When entering an installation, only view or access the areas needed to complete the notification. Touch as little as possible and maintain a safe social distance
  - If an inspector is unable to physically view an installation but has accepted pictures, videos or other evidence, they will record what was accepted or what they were/were not able to view in the notification comments, preceded with “COVID19”
4. Technical Advisors are available to assist with answers to technical questions, code interpretations, as well as assistance with concerns over any video or picture.

What ESA is not doing:

ESA inspectors will not enter **occupied areas** of the following facilities except where permitted (exceptions as approved by the ESA General Manager and/or Senior Inspector):

- Long Term Care Homes and Seniors residences
- Hospitals



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- Retirement Homes
- Day Care facilities
- Personal Dwellings – including homes, apartments and condos
- Schools, Colleges, Universities
- Community Housing for non-critical routine inspections
- ESA staff will not be attending external meetings of large groups (OEL nights, Conferences) until further notice.
- All Training Sessions and all Master Exams are canceled until further notice.

These steps are taken both to protect the residents of those facilities, as well as our staff from unnecessary exposure.

As always, everyone is encouraged to continue proper use of hand and personal hygiene and use of personal protective equipment as instructed by site risk assessments.