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Subject: COVID-19 Weekly Update – May 15th

Dear Staff,

I hope you all remain well. It's been a pivotal week as we look towards the beginning of [BC's Restart Plan](#), and the work this entails to move forward, as a region and province, in a thoughtful, considered way, and also rebuild in a way that betters the already incredible province we have.

Re-Connecting to Head Office

It's been wonderful to welcome more staff this week back to head office, as we began our gradual on-site re-connecting as our province moves towards Phase 2. I understand that some staff had some hesitation prior to returning; I've heard many pieces of positive feedback on the steps taken, the changes to the building and that many staff are feeling positive about the new environment, especially the physical distancing and disinfection measures in place. We have been closely following Dr. Bonnie Henry's guidance and will continue to do so. We have adjusted our building occupancy limits as a result. Dr. Henry's modelling information has made clear that if contacts stay at 60% of normal, or less, the curve would remain flat, and that if contacts rise to 80% of normal, or go up to 100%, this would send transmission rates shooting upwards. At this point, we are treating that '60% of normal' as a hard ceiling and will not be exceeding this in our office sites, until there is a vaccine or community immunity, or we hear otherwise from the Provincial Health Officer. In our field sites, we will be continuing the preventative safety measures and protocols as well.

Prior to the gradual on-site re-connecting, about 20% of office-based staff were regularly at office sites on any given day; now, with staff starting to attend Head Office one day a week, we are at about 30-35% of staff onsite each day. We anticipate remaining at the 30-50% occupancy mark for quite some time. As always, please follow the guidance of our Provincial Health Officer. If you are sick, do not come to work; please stay home.

Executive Team – Next Steps

As noted several months back, Ravi Chhina has been preparing to move into the role of General Manager, HR and Corporate Services, on a full-time basis. This will take effect as of this coming Tuesday, May 19th. Thank you to Ravi for all his efforts in supporting the transition to Water Services and now taking on his new challenge. And, a huge thank you and gratitude to Donna Brown for all of her countless contributions to this work, and for leading this department with such heart. Donna has left an indelible mark on our organization; so much so, I'm not letting her retire just yet, and will save my many verbose words and recognition for her actual retirement. I am pleased to note that Donna will be staying on for now, until towards the end of the year, as General Manager, Strategic Initiatives. Donna will work with me and the executive team on some key projects and work, and will be in an office with the External Relations team.

Our Member Jurisdictions – Gradual Reopening

In light of BC's Restart Plan, our member jurisdictions are preparing for a reopening of libraries,

recreation centres, and more, and this is a tremendous amount of effort. I don't think we can underestimate how much work this is to launch this reopening, and to do so in a careful, measured way. It is far, far more complicated to reopen than it was to close. The number of issues that our member jurisdictions are having to deal with are quite incredible. Even such things as opening a library or a gym or a community centre and permitting certain activities within these centres – it's different considerations whether it is seniors playing pickle ball or youths playing basketball; our municipalities are all tackling questions we've never had before. We wish them well as they take on this work and as an organization, we're supporting information sharing so our jurisdictions can all be aware of each other's efforts and can learn from each other's experiences.

Staff Communication

There are two recent stories on Intranet News that I want to bring your attention to: one is on the [Annacis WWTP Dome Roof Lift Success here](#), which is a really neat story on some incredible maintenance work our O&M staff have taken on, and also, our staff have put together a great story on how things are going during COVID-19 at one of Metro Vancouver's most popular spots in our Regional Parks – [Wreck Beach](#). [See it here.](#)

The second part of my interview with internal communications is available in the attached and on intranet news [here – Part 2](#).

And now that you've heard from me, on Part 1 and Part 2, I really want to hear from you. I want to ask YOU some questions. (And please respond. Otherwise I'll start to think I've been writing to myself this whole time. I already talk to myself at home. Let's please not make it a double whammy.)

1. *(Similar to what I was asked.)* **What would be the one life lesson/ life skill you'd say you learned during COVID-19?**
2. **What has inspired you most during this time?**

Answer both, or one – completely up to you! Just please answer. Send them through to [Internal Communications here](#). A list will be compiled, (I would like to include your names if you're comfortable) for me and for a collated Intranet News article. I will read them all; I really hope to hear from you. Please send them through by end of day next week Friday, (May 22nd).

A Work Philosophy

At the end of the day last week, I took a little walk through several of our floors at head office, to check all our signage, disinfection stations, and additional safety measures, as we prepared to welcome back office staff that had been working primarily remotely. I got to the HR floor and noticed two large posters/signs that I thought quite accurately sums up my working philosophy right now, so I took the liberty of taking some photos and am attaching them below. *(And sorry to our IT team, as I'm sure I'm wrecking our bandwidth by sending photos. And bandwidth, is that even the right term? I guess maybe an Engineer should stay in their own lane.)*