



## Local 9705 Covid-19 Statement

May 19th, 2020

To all Members of Local 9705,

We are beginning the third month of Covid-19 restrictions and hardship in our area. First, I want to thank all of you, because of your sacrifices and hard work in adapting to the new normal, we seem to be making a difference in slowing the spread of the virus within BC. New infections are on the decline and the number of people who have recovered from confirmed infection is now higher than the number of people still sick.

We are beginning to see some of our work that was lost coming back. The summer maintenance crew up at Red is back to work. The Company worked with the Union and utilized resources shared by Teck, to come up with protocols and procedures. This will help ensure that work resumes as safely as possible.

The Manager at the Waneta Mall has informed me that they are beginning preparations for the potential reopening of some businesses in the Mall over the coming weeks. Again, working with the Union and contacts within the Teck janitorial crew to design safe work procedures and cleaning protocols for our workers there, as well as, protecting the public when businesses begin to reopen.

At the Sandman hotel, occupancy is beginning to increase and slowly we are seeing more hours available for our housekeepers and Maintenance. Hopefully, this continues, and we can get more people back to work soon.

These are all positive signs and we will see more as businesses begin to reopen in our area. As they do, it will be extremely important for all of us to support them in any way we can. Many of us have gotten in the habit of looking to online sources for our purchases. Now it is more important than ever that we support our local businesses and services, be it pharmacies, restaurants, hardware, or electronics stores, pastry shops, clothing stores, or any of the other local small businesses that provide what we need. Many of them have had to suffer through two months of shut down with no income and will need to see an upsurge in local demand for what they sell, or we will risk losing them for good.

Again, thank you all for your continued hard work in finding ways to go about your work and homelives safely. We can't let our guard down yet or expect that we will go back to the way we were last year immediately, but I'm hopeful that we will begin to see a reduction in the hardship that our communities have had to endure. If we all remain vigilant and continue to maintain reasonable social distancing and hygiene, I see that better days are finally on the horizon.

Ron McKenzie

President, USW 9705