

Message from President and CEO Chris Webb

I am pleased to have the opportunity to communicate directly with you through our newsletter. In ordinary times, our companies would have marked the upcoming Occupational Safety and Health Week from May 3 - 9 with a number of special events. This year, we are highlighting safety and health issues through this special edition of the NGC newsletter.

Some of you are still on the job in your regular workplace. Many of TSI's employees have had to continue work at the Vale site to keep vital services operating. They are working under new rules and restrictions, all designed to keep them and their communities safe. Others across the

organization are doing their part by working from home. Our goal is always to return safely to our families and loved ones at the end of our shift.

I am proud of the investments that our companies make to keep our workplaces safe. In 2019, we had no lost-time workplace injuries. We are all proud of that record.

In this newsletter, we learn about your continuing efforts to keep employees safe in their regular job-related activities, and now, in the context of COVID-19. You have written about the supports available to ensure that our mental health is protected and enhanced.



I want to thank you for all of your efforts to keep yourselves, your colleagues, and your communities safe; to ask you to continue following public health advice; and to let you know that our group of companies will always have your back.

Chris

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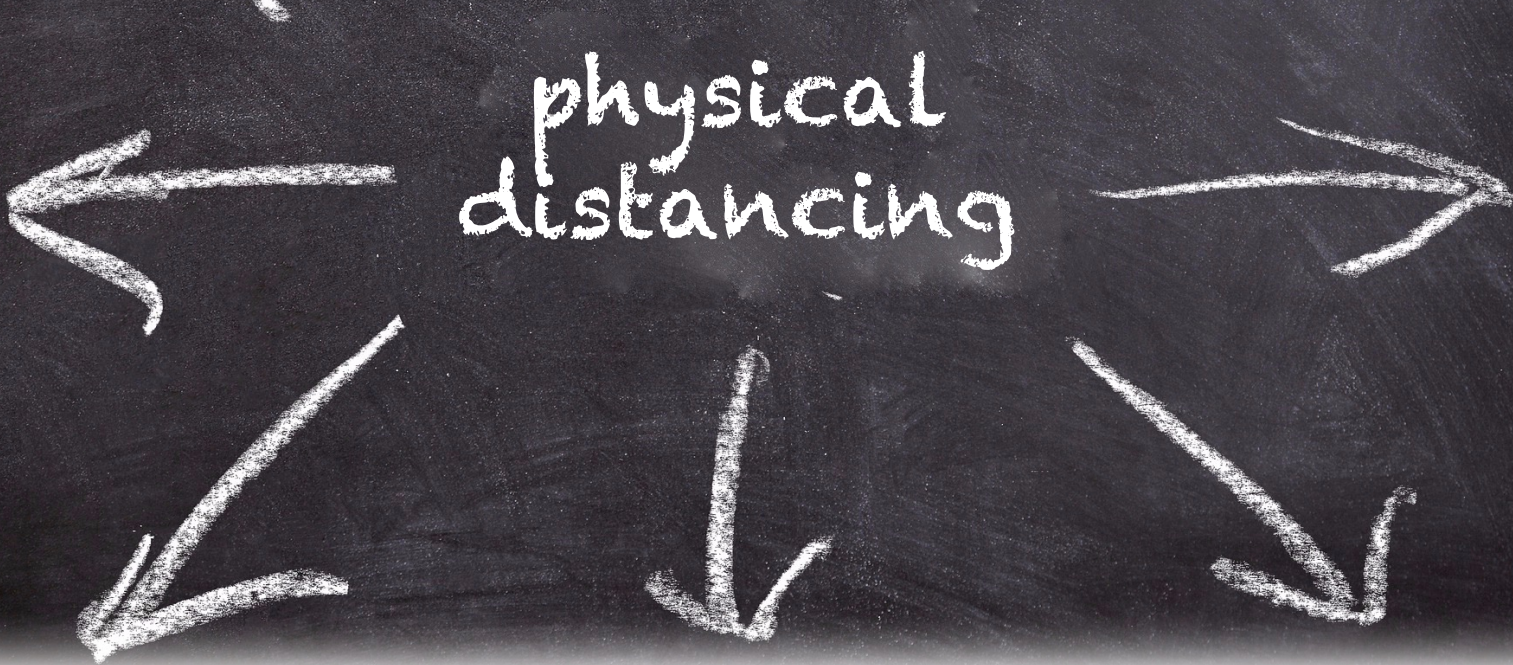
Letter from Russell Banzet, NGC Human Resources

**OCCUPATIONAL
SAFETY & HEALTH**



*In the interests of preventing the spread of COVID-19, this newsletter is available online only.
This edition of **NGC News** may be read online at ngc-ng.ca and on NGC's Facebook page.*

physical distancing



NCI develops physical distancing policy

Goal is to allow crews to work safely in 2020

Steve Downey, NCI's Safety Officer, had his work plan set for the winter offseason once construction ended in December. He would spend much of the time making safety plans, developing policies, working on a matrix to identify NCI employee skills, and design training programs to address gaps. But then March 18 arrived and the province declared COVID-19 a public health emergency.

The declaration by the province imposed a long list of restrictions on the movement of people and goods and on business operations. Construction would be permitted to continue as long as appropriate safety measures were put in place, with a focus on physical distancing.

General manager Tom Lyall, Downey, and office manager Jennifer Saunders got to work. With some initial resources provided to the industry by the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association, NCI began drafting a plan to complete work safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Our goal was to develop a plan that would allow us to continue work without risking people's health," says Lyall. "We decided pretty quickly that the magic number on a project was two. Our scope of work is perfect for two people. For interior work on homes, for example, two people would be adequate 90 percent of the time."

Lyall, Downey, and Saunders completed all of their work without having to meet face-to-face. "We worked it all out by email and phone," says Lyall. "We

would develop material and send it back and forth by email. We use a program called Microsoft Teams. That allows all of us to see each other's work and track the changes that are being made."

One thing that the entire NCI group understands is that the physical distancing policy is a work in progress. "We will have to develop procedures for specific jobs," says Steve Downey. "With a job like roofing, we have to ask ourselves how we can do that type of work and still keep physical distancing measures in place. We may decide that with some types of jobs, the project will have to go on the back burner because we can't conform to physical distance measures."

Indeed, one recent project in Nain didn't go ahead for that reason. Tom Lyall says the work would have taken place in an occupied home. "Even though we had our policy in place to keep the appropriate distance between our crew and the homeowner, we wanted to be sure that the homeowner was comfortable," he said. "We interviewed the person, which is now part of our COVID-19 procedure, and in the end, he wasn't comfortable having a work crew in the home."

It's easier to make the two-person crew work in an unoccupied building, such as the recent renovations to NCI's warehouse in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and the modifications to the former Transition House in Nain.

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physical distancing cont'd

JOB HAZARD ANALYSIS CRITICAL

NCI carries out an assessment of each job and workplace as part of its hazard assessment. COVID-19 protection measures will now become an additional part of that work. "It could be something like laying a floor," says Lyall. "In the past, we did that in a particular way. Now, we will have to do it with physical distancing measures in place. It will require some modifications to our work practices. But we have to learn to work in this way."

And that now has become part of the process, to educate NCI staff on laying the additional lens of physical distancing on each job that they undertake. "We have to work safely," says Lyall. "Our new project manager will educate staff and reinforce our policies and procedures. Our safety officer (Steve Downey) will also be part of that process to educate people on their roles and responsibilities in the COVID-19 environment."

He says the company will have zero tolerance for people who don't follow the rules. "If they don't follow the physical distancing rules, they will be

immediately dismissed. We can't risk having our crew and our communities exposed to the virus."

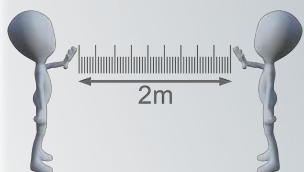
FOCUS ON ACQUIRING PPE

NCI has been at work attempting to source personal protective equipment for workers when they return to the job. "Some jobs such as plastering and insulation installs cannot be completed safely without proper gear, including masks," says Lyall. "The healthcare field obviously had to have first call on what was available. But supplies are coming back online. We just ordered 300 dust masks. We have lots of gloves. And we have a good supply of sanitizers. We have shipped some kits to the coast already and we will have more kits together soon to send to our crews in the various communities."

For NCI, all of these efforts add up to a massive effort to continue essential work and at the same time, keep everyone safe. "We're giving our people the tools and education to do the job safely," says Lyall. "By doing their work safely, we're doing our duty to keep our crews and our communities safe."



Physical Distancing Policy



Develop a plan to stay 2 metres away from others, everywhere in the workplace, including the office, the warehouse, around vehicles and lifts, and in the lunchroom.



Reduce the need for, and the duration of physical interaction. Minimize the need for face-to-face meetings.



Cut unnecessary travel, gatherings, workshops, and training sessions.



If you don't feel well, stay home.



Jeremy Diamond and Craig Mitchell are Health, Safety, and Environment Advisors with Torgait Services Inc, site services provider at the Vale site in Voisey's Bay. They write about the challenges posed by COVID-19, both at the job site and at home in the community. But they didn't just discuss how the virus has impacted people's lives. They also wrote about togetherness, how everyone at TSI is pitching in to get the job done, and that if you need help, it's available at the end of a phone line.

By Jeremy Diamond, TSI Health, Safety & Environment Advisor

The COVID-19 global pandemic has made for a challenging time. Preparation, positivity, and patience go a long way in protecting our collective health as we all navigate this unprecedented event. It is understandable that we feel anxious, overwhelmed, and insecure as we travel this path.

TSI is in a position to help. The company has an Employee Assistance Program that any employee in need of support can reach out to. **The EAP coaching, counselling, and support line is available 24 hours a day at 1-800-663-1142.**

Vale has announced that subject to the approval of its application by the federal government under the Emergency Wage Subsidy program, all embedded contractors who are unable to work onsite during the pandemic, will be guaranteed a percentage of their wages over the next three months, beginning on April 15. This includes TSI employees and Vale staff. Wages would be guaranteed at 90 percent in the first month and declining by 10 percentage points to 80 and 70-percent in the next two months. This would take a huge burden off employees and ensure that all employees are supported.

TSI continues to update all employees with the most recent information as we work our way through this pandemic and continue to work, some of us from home, and others on site.

Regardless of how your job has been impacted by the measures implemented as a result of COVID-19, it is



important to stay connected with both co-workers and management. We are still "One Team-One Approach." In order to protect ourselves, our families, and our communities, it is important that we follow the guidelines set out by our companies, health officials, and the various governments. We have one goal, and that is, to prevent the spread of this virus. We all have a part to play to ensure that we flatten the curve to end this pandemic.

I've worked with many companies in the construction industry and I moved on as contracts ended. I began my current job as a Safety Advisor with TSI in August of 2019. This experience has given me a new perspective on the construction industry. I have come to realize that TSI is not just a company doing construction. TSI is a family away from home.

You get attached to this organization. You come to depend on the stability and professionalism. It is an enjoyable place to work. TSI treats all employees with respect, dignity, and fairness.

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant significant changes in the way we work. We have implemented physical distancing procedures for those at site and managers have learned to work remotely. Advances in technology have made working from home possible and productive.

We are always here to address any concerns or questions that employees have. Please feel free to reach out.

Regardless of how your job has been impacted... it is important to stay connected with both co-workers and management.



By Craig Mitchell, TSI Health, Safety & Environment Advisor

Life as we know it will never be the same. COVID-19 has put the world at a standstill. As each day passes, there are new findings. Changes are being made to the way we live our lives and the way that we work. This is a very stressful time for all of us. People have lost their jobs, some are working from home, and only essential workers are allowed to work at their regular job site. It is a struggle for many people. As we try to get through this rough time, we are dealing with new safety precautions at home in our communities and at work.

Some of these precautions include social and physical distancing, ongoing cleaning throughout the buildings, signs that are posted reminding us to wash our hands for 20 seconds, directions that we should cough or sneeze into our sleeve, and warnings to not touch our eyes, nose, or mouth with our hands.

Some comparisons between home and work:

Social/physical distancing. Everyone must keep 6 feet apart both at work and while in the community. Lines are placed on the floor in supermarkets to identify where people should stand, as well as in dining halls at work to maintain the distance.

At home, there are limits to the number of people that are allowed in stores at one time. Employees are placed at entrances to let you know when you can enter the store. Wipes are provided to sanitize shopping carts before use, or carts are cleaned by staff before people use them.

On site, there is a limit to the number of workers that perform care and maintenance. TSI has updated Job Hazard Assessments (JHA) with special precautions for working during COVID-19, including at break



times and meal times. Only 2 people are permitted per table, and they must be seated at opposite corners. Break times have been staggered to accommodate this seating arrangement. Wipes or cleaning supplies are provided at entrances and in vehicles for workers to wipe down surfaces before they operate. Buses are wiped down before passengers are allowed on, including seatbelts.

TSI is maintaining the Vale site to keep everything running while we go through this tough time together. My cross-shift and I are working from home to assist people and to help keep our business running. We support our management, supervisors, and workers for all onsite safety requirements. We are in constant communication with supervisors and management. We are helping create JHA's, investigations, reports, and toolboxes. It's a different environment working from home and not being directly on site with our colleagues. We are lucky to have the technology to enable us to continue to be able help our team.

We take safety very seriously and our workers are our top priority. We have a great team. From management to our workers, everyone is involved in safety. We discuss safety at the start of every morning during our daily toolbox and in our weekly safety meeting. We continue to update workers throughout the day. We have an open-door policy for any concerns at work or at home. Safety must be a two-way street and it's a way of life. Accidents can happen anywhere, not only at work. We want everyone to seriously take all the advice that is being given daily so that we can ensure that we all come back safe and healthy. We look forward to seeing you all again on site. Until then, remember this:

"Safety is not only a Word, It's For Life!"



Safety First

Nunatsiavut Marine prepares for 2020 season



By Gary Latimer
General Manager,
NMI

We are looking forward to commencing the 2020 season to serve our customers as best we can under the circumstances while at the same time protecting the health and well being of all of you. We don't know right now exactly what the start up will look like with COVID-19 restrictions, but we can safely assume that there will be a few changes in procedures and routines to protect you and our customers.

We are working on those and we are sourcing, ordering, and bringing in the necessary safety and personal protective equipment such as sanitizers, masks, and gloves to ensure that we have stock on hand to begin the season.

We would normally be required to commence taking reservations on May 1st, 2020, but the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has directed our contractor (Labrador Marine Inc.) that this will not be necessary at this time, since we don't know how long the travel restrictions will be in place.

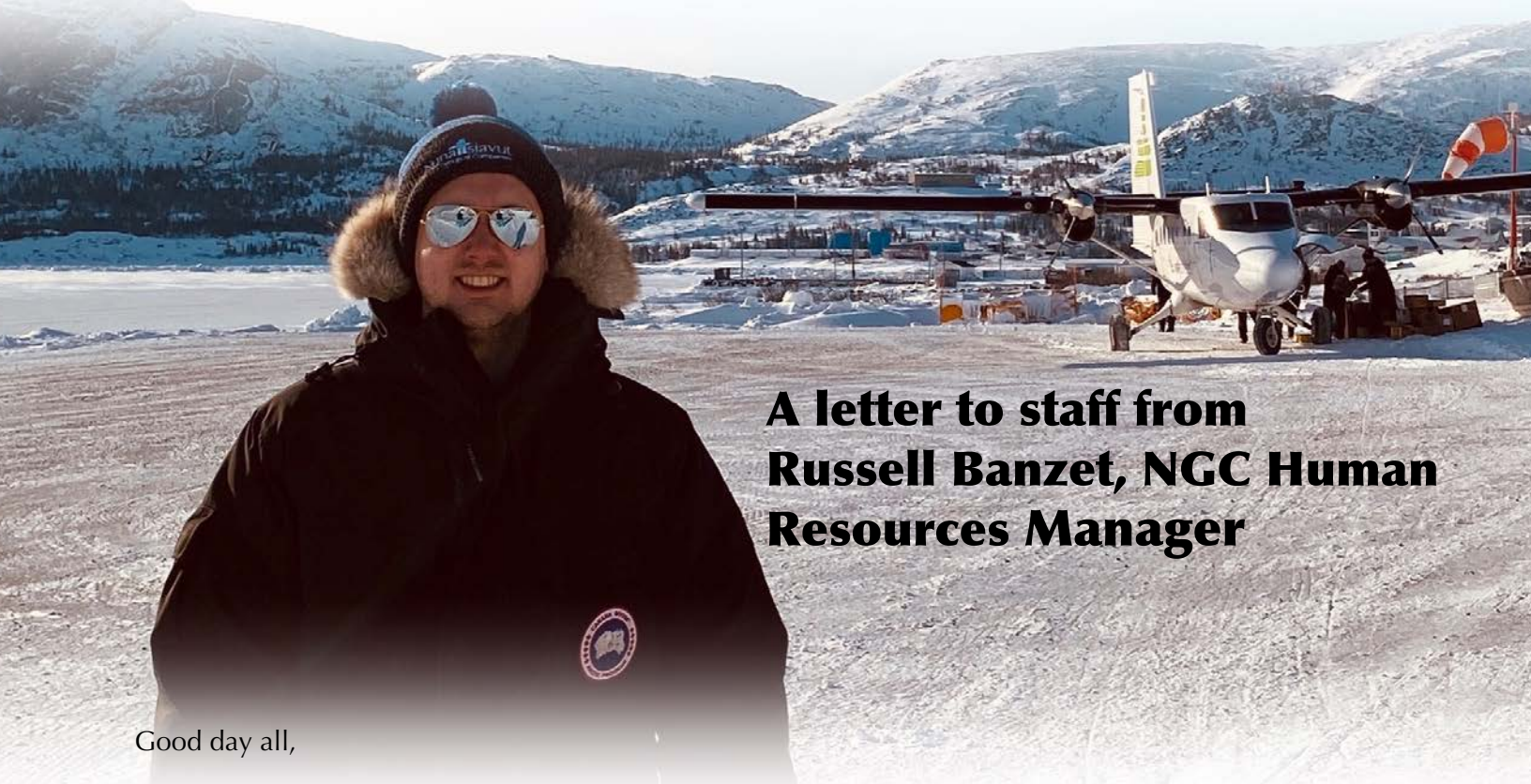
As we receive more information, we will keep you informed and up to speed on what our plans are, and how we plan to do our jobs this season.

In the meantime, take care, stay safe and healthy.

Safety Tip

Keeping COVID-19 at bay

Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.



A letter to staff from Russell Banzet, NGC Human Resources Manager

Good day all,

I would like to congratulate each of you for your continued efforts during this time. Collectively, we have done our part with social distancing through working remotely and it has paid off. The pandemic curve for our province has been flattening as most people continue to follow federal and provincial guidelines.

On April 22, we marked Administrative Professionals Day. This day is becoming widely recognized as companies and organizations appreciate the essential role that administrative staff play in their efficient and productive operation. Without administrative professionals, the operations of many companies would come to a screeching halt. Each administrative staff member at NGC plays an important role that allows for our organization to succeed as a unified team – and we continue to be grateful for this.

May 3 to 9 is North American Occupational Safety and Health Week and we kick it off with a 2020 revised NGC Health and Safety Manual. I would like to personally thank Steve Downey from Nunatsiavut Construction Inc. for his consultation in helping revise the manual which now includes a section specifically outlining Pandemics. An electronic version of the Health and Safety Manual will be made available to everyone. At NGC, safety is paramount. We need to continue to make a conscious effort to keep the workplace safe so that each of our employees can return home to their families safely after each work day.

Once our offices have fully reopened and the provincial and federal guidelines allow for us to ease restrictions, many of us will come together to celebrate. We are looking forward to that time and for things to come back to normal within our communities. As long as we continue to follow the federal and provincial public health guidelines, we will continue to get closer to achieving that goal.

At NGC, we will keep the momentum going to flatten the curve. I'm confident that the residents of our communities will do the same. We are in this together and through our collective dedication, we will get through this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Russell Banzet
Human Resources Manager
Nunatsiavut Group of Companies



Need Help?

Help is Available.

Several of the contributors to this newsletter have commented on the uncharted waters that we find ourselves in with the COVID-19 pandemic. They have offered sound advice and words of reassurance.

Nunatsiavut Construction Inc. Safety Officer Steve Downey distributes a weekly safety bulletin. The April 21 edition is worth a read. It discusses how the constant talk and restrictions around COVID-19 can lead to stress and anxiety. Titled "How to Avoid Burnout Amid a Pandemic", Steve has some practical coping advice.

NGC Human Resources Manager Russell Banzet has produced a poster with 10 tips for helping maintain positive mental health. It's full of practical, easy-to-use advice. Russell is available by phone for confidential consultations at (709) 899-0795.

Our regional health authority, Labrador-Grenfell Health, has produced material on protecting your health. Their website has links to resources that are just a click or a phone call away. The website address is lghealth.ca.

Take advantage of these resources. They are there for you.



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