

February 11, 2021

S.E.C./Olymel
7550 40 Avenue
Red Deer, AB
T4P 2H8

Olymel Management and Staff:

SUBJECT: COVID-19 OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

We are writing to notify you (the management and staff of the Olymel meat processing plant in Red Deer) that despite measures put in at the plant to control the COVID-19 outbreak declared in November 2020, the number of COVID-19 cases continue to rise among staff at Olymel, especially since mid-January. The rapid rise in cases has become a concern for public health and as such, more measures are now required to control this outbreak.

While Olymel management has been working diligently with Alberta Health Services Public Health to contain this outbreak, case numbers continue to increase. As of February 10th, 2021, a total of 297 cases have been recorded since the outbreak was declared with approximately 125 active cases among staff. Moreover, on-site testing conducted at the plant yielded an approximate 20% positive rate among those who were tested. According to this rate, around 1 in 5 workers at the plant may be infected and spreading the virus.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 among workers both inside and outside the plant, we are asking that the Olymel management team **require all employees who:**

- have not tested or tested negative for COVID-19 since January 15, 2021 get tested as soon as possible.
- have tested positive for COVID-19 (and have isolated) since January 1, 2021 do not need to get tested again, at this time.

Staff can access swabbing through the COVID-19 assessment center by calling **8-1-1** to book an appointment.

Additionally, **all staff** should be reminded of the following:

- If someone tests positive for COVID-19, then they are mandated by law to notify **all** of their employers. Around 60% of Olymel staff hold at least one other job outside of working at the plant and these employers must be notified of positive cases as well.
- If a staff member works at Olymel and a healthcare facility, such as a hospital, long-term care facility, or lodge, then by CMOH Order 32-2020, they must work at only one of these sites until the outbreak at Olymel has been declared over.
 - Similarly, if a staff member works at a healthcare facility that is under outbreak, then they have to choose whether to keep working there, or just work at Olymel.

- Close contacts including household members of workers who tested positive are legally required to self-isolate. The self-isolation duration is 14 days from the last exposure, for 10 days from start of symptoms if they become symptomatic, or 10 days from the day the contact was tested if their test is positive.
- **Failure to obey the Chief Medical Officer of Health Orders could result in individuals being fined \$1200 or more.**

AHS is also recommending that all breaks at work (including lunch and smoking breaks) are to be monitored by designated personnel to make sure that distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE) rules are followed.

For questions related to Chief Medical Officer of Health Orders and COVID-19 guidelines, please see: Alberta Health (www.alberta.ca/covid) or Alberta Health Services (www.ahs.ca).

For questions related to isolation requirements, please see: www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx. If you need help isolating, please see www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx#jumplinks-3

For questions related health and well-being, please refer to Health Link (8-1-1).

Sincerely,

Dr. Mohammed Mosli, MD, FRCP(C), ISAM
Medical Officer of Health
Alberta Health Services, Central Zone