Membership Briefing Note
COVID-19 UPDATE 8.0, MARCH 23, 2020

“Like the saying goes, “if you got it, a truck brought it”. Remember those words as you wait for store shelves to be restocked with food, emergency relief supplies as well as vital medical and sanitation products we need to combat the spread of this virus.”

Obituary—Erwen Siemens (December 26, 1938 - March 15, 2020)

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Doug Siemens Father Erwen Siemens. On behalf of the STA Board we wish to send our condolences to Doug and his family. Let’s keep the Siemens family in our prayers. Erwen passed away peacefully, Sunday March 15, 2020.

Erwen Siemens has a long-lasting history with the STA and served as President of the Association from 1973-1974. Erwen founded Kindersley Transportation Ltd., now Siemens Transportation Group in 1962 with only a single truck hauling between Kindersley and Saskatoon. Erwen was inducted into the Saskatchewan Transportation Hall of Fame in 2005 as the first inductee to follow his father, K.K. Siemens, inducted in 1992.

Here is the obituary notice published in the Saskatoon Star Phoenix.

Saskatchewan Provincial Update

Contacting Distilleries

The STA has been in contact with a number of distilleries in the Province to discuss the availability of rubbing alcohol. Truck Drivers have been deemed an essential service both Provincially and Federally and therefore should be able to access sanitation supplies to ensure they take every necessary step and follow all guidelines set out by our government leaders. We are looking to connect with a distillery to supply trucking companies with these needed supplies.

Saskatchewan Business Council (SBC) – Jeremy Harrison, Minister of Trade and Export on developing immediate plan-of-action

The Saskatchewan Business Council—which the STA sits on—participated in discussions today with the Honourable Jeremy Harrison, Minister of Trade and export, to discuss the immediate threats COVID-19 will have on the economy. Having a clear plan to address the economic uncertainty will be critical to mitigating the different threats our economy will continue to face.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

The STA has been told that WellPoint Occupational Health in Regina is no longer carrying out drug and alcohol testing due to limited capacity. Their Edmonton and Calgary locations however are still carrying this out. The STA has also been told that the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) will do its drug
and alcohol testing pull for March (you will have to June to complete the tests) and there will be no random pull in April until further communication.

**Important for Employers:** Provincial Government Announces Financial Supports for Saskatchewan Employers and Employees:

These supports include:

- Self-Isolation Support Program
- Three Month PST Remittance Deferral and Audit Suspension
- Crown Utility Interest Deferral Programs
- Student Loan Repayment Moratorium
- Changes to Employment Standard Regulation (including layoff measures)

You can read more on each support, [here](#). In these uncertain and challenging times for business in Saskatchewan, the STA commends the Government for its proactive approach to responding to the financial burden COVID-19 is leaving.

**Canadian Provincial Update**

**Ontario & Quebec:**

Both Quebec and Ontario have announced that non-essential businesses will shut down as of Midnight Tuesday, March 24, 2020. Further details including essential vs. non-essential designations would be announced Tuesday. The Quebec Premier said Quebec will be on hold for three weeks. You can learn more about the announcement, [here](#).

**Trucking HR Canada**

Trucking HR Canada is here to support trucking and logistics employers in navigating their response to COVID-19. This document includes resources for business continuity to assist employers in trucking and logistics, both big and small, in their response and employee communication efforts. This guide includes resources on remote working, taking care of our drivers, leadership and employee communications during a crisis, health and safety, self-care and wellness, and government relief programs and funding. You can find their guide, [here](#).

**Federal Update**

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, announced a new set of economic measures to help stabilize the economy and help Canadians affected by the impacts of this challenging period. This includes:

- Emergency Care Benefit: for workers who must stay home and do not have access to paid sick leave, you can access up to $900 bi-weekly for up to 15 weeks. There are a number of requirements a person would have to meet to qualify.
• Emergency Support Benefit: The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) will provide up to $5 billion in support to workers who are not eligible for EI and who are facing unemployment.

• Extend the tax filing deadline for individuals to June 1, and allow all taxpayers to defer, until after August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after today and before September 2020. This relief would apply to tax balances due, as well as installments, under Part I of the Income Tax Act. No interest or penalties will accumulate on these amounts during this period. This measure will result in households having more money available during this period.

• Provide eligible small businesses a 10 per cent wage subsidy for the next 90 days, up to a maximum of $1,375 per employee and $25,000 per employer. Employers benefiting from this measure would include corporations eligible for the small business deduction, as well as not-for-profit organizations and charities. This will help employers keep people on their payroll and help Canadians keep their jobs.

All details can be found, here.

Social Distancing

An important reminder from PM Trudeau. Social distancing is the single best way to keep people around you safe. 2 meters between yourself and others—avoiding groups—staying at home as much as possible. Ignoring this advise will only put others in jeopardy.

Prime Minister Announces Support for Farmers and Agri-Food Businesses:

Farm Credit Canada will receive support from the Government of Canada that will allow for an additional $5 billion in lending capacity to producers, agribusinesses, and food processors. This will offer increased flexibility to farmers who face cashflow issues and to processors who are impacted by lost sales, helping them to remain financially strong during these critical months. Further details, here.

Rest Areas

New Jersey Truck Driver Facilities

All rest areas are open on NJ and PA Turnpikes, CT rest areas — and All CT service plazas will remain open 24/7. NY rest areas also open.

For drivers along the NJ Interstate and not on Turnpike Quick Check and WaWa’s are open and a great option for drivers as many are located within less than a mile from the interstate. Restrooms will be open. I contacted both companies. They would absolutely be pleased to service our drivers. Drivers can find locations at their websites and also download apps

Special Hotel rates for Truckers in Sarnia

Message from Holiday Inn Express Sarnia – Point Edward:
“During this time of growing uncertainty and anxiety it has become increasingly obvious how much Canadian rely on truck drivers to carry necessary supplies and day-to-day to vendors throughout Ontario. As a hotel that sits on the border of the United States and Canada, we see the sheer volume of traffic these drivers provide and their stories. We wanted to reach out and advise we will offer special rates to drivers whom are at their hour limit or need a rest during this time. The Holiday Inn Express Sarnia – Point Edward understands we need to help take care of these vital workers. We are continuing to operate as a brand new hotel with a breakfast included in rates. Thank you for your consideration!

For more info Email  amanda.stewart@hiexsarnia.com

**Other News**

Please see the attached letter regarding operations at the Esso Commercial Cardlock Network, Husky Travel Centres and HuskyPRO, regarding their actions/initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic. Find the letter, [here](#).