

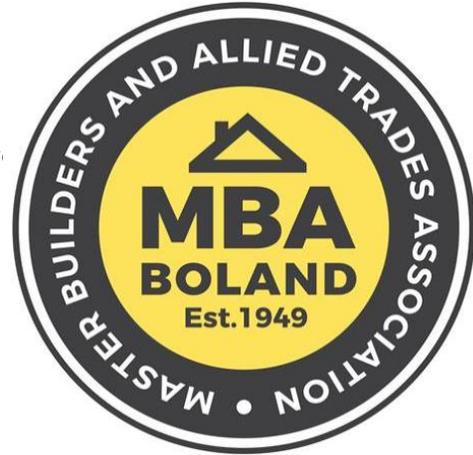
MBA BOLAND

Concordiastr/St. 23 Suider Paarl
Posbus/PO Box 1402, Suider-Paarl 7624
Tel. (021) 863 3330 Faks/Fax (021) 863 3331/086 6178 7
E-Pos/E-Mail safety@mbaboland.org.za
www.mbaboland.org.za

Director: Daniël Uys

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Dear MBA member



MBA BOLAND NEWSLETTER: COVID - 19 NEWS FLASH

All we hear about nowadays is the Corona or Covid-19 virus. I don't want to bore you down with an overdose of information, but I do think it is important that your employees should be informed with the most basic information to empower themselves in order to prevent the spread of this deadly virus in the workplace and more specifically on construction sites. The best way to do it, is by means of "Question and Answer Method" about everyday activities. Herewith the most common day-to-day questions and answers to help them with easy step by step self-study:

1. What is a Corona virus ?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.

2. What is COVID-19 ?

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

3. What are the symptoms of COVID - 19 ?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness and a dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops a difficulty in breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop a serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty in breathing should seek medical attention.

4. How does the Covid-19 spread ?

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs or exhales droplets. This is why it is important to stay more than 1 meter (3 feet) away from a person who is sick.

5. Can the virus that causes COVID-19 be transmitted through the air?

Studies to date suggest that the virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through contact with respiratory droplets rather than through the air.

6. What can I do to protect myself and prevent the spreading of Covid-19

Follow the guidance outlined here under :

- Self-isolation by staying at home if you begin to feel unwell, even with mild symptoms such as headache, low grade fever (37.3 C or above) and slight runny nose, until you recover. If it is essential for you to have someone bring you supplies or to go out, e.g. to buy food, then wear a mask to avoid infecting other people.
- Why? Avoiding contact with others and visits to medical facilities will allow these facilities to operate more effectively and help protect you and others from possible COVID-19 and other viruses.

- If you develop fever, cough and have difficulty breathing, seek medical advice promptly as this may be due to a respiratory infection or other serious condition. Call in advance and tell your provider of any recent travel or contact with travelers.
- Why? Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also help to prevent possible spread of COVID-19 and other viruses.

7. Can CoVID-19 be transmitted from a person who has no symptoms?

The main way the disease spreads is through respiratory droplets expelled by someone who is coughing. The risk of catching COVID-19 from someone with no symptoms at all is very low.

However, many people with COVID-19 experience only mild symptoms. This is particularly true at the early stages of the disease. It is therefore possible to catch COVID-19 from someone who has, for example, just a mild cough and does not feel ill.

8. Can I catch COVID-19 from the feces of someone with the disease?

The risk of catching COVID-19 from the feces of an infected person appears to be low. While initial investigations suggest the virus may be present in feces in some cases, spread through this route is not a main feature of the outbreak. Because this is a risk, however, it is another reason to clean hands regularly, after using the bathroom and before eating.

9. Should I worry about Covid-19?

Illness due to COVID-19 infection is generally mild, especially for children and young adults. However, it can cause serious illness: about 1 in every 5 people who catch it needs hospital care. It is therefore quite normal for people to worry about how the COVID-19 outbreak will affect them and their loved ones.

We can channel our concerns into actions to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our communities. First and foremost among these actions is regular and thorough hand-washing and good respiratory hygiene. Secondly, keep informed and follow the advice of the local health authorities including any restrictions put in place on travel, movement and gatherings.

10. Who is at risk developing serious illnesses due to Covid-19

While we are still learning about how COVID-2019 affects people, older persons and persons with pre-existing medical conditions (such as high blood pressure, heart disease, lung disease, cancer or diabetes) appear to develop serious illness more often than others.

11. Are there any medicines or treatments for Covid-19

While some western, traditional or home remedies may provide comfort and alleviate symptoms of COVID-19, there is no evidence that current medicine can prevent or cure the disease. WHO does not recommend self-medication with any medicines, including antibiotics, as a prevention or cure for COVID-19. However, there are several ongoing clinical trials that include both western and traditional medicines.

Until today, there is no vaccine and no specific antiviral medicine to prevent or treat COVID-2019. However, those affected should receive care to relieve symptoms. People with serious illness should be hospitalized. Most patients recover thanks to supportive care.

12. Are there any vaccines or specific drug treatments for Covid-19?

The most effective ways to protect yourself and others against COVID-19 are to clean your hands frequently, cover your cough with the bend of elbow or tissue, and maintain a distance of at least 1 meter (3 feet) from people who are coughing or sneezing.

13. Is Covid-19 the same as SARS?

NO. The virus that causes COVID-19 and the one that caused the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 are related to each other genetically, but the diseases they cause are quite different.

SARS was more deadly but much less infectious than COVID-19. There has been no outbreaks of SARS anywhere in the world since 2003.

14. Should I wear a mask to protect myself against COVID-19?

Only wear a mask if you are ill with COVID-19 symptoms (especially coughing) or looking after someone who may have COVID-19. A disposable face mask can only be used once. If you are not ill or looking

after someone who is ill, then you are wasting a mask. There is a world-wide shortage of masks, so WHO urges people to use masks wisely.

WHO advises rational use of medical masks to avoid unnecessary wastage of precious resources and miss-use thereof.

15. How long is the incubation period of Covid-19?

The "incubation period" means the time between catching the virus and beginning to have symptoms of the disease. Most estimates of the incubation period for COVID-19 range from 1-14 days, most commonly around five days. These estimates will be updated as more data becomes available.

16. Can humans become infected with Covid-19 from animal source?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in animals. Occasionally, people get infected with these viruses which may then spread to other people. For example, SARS-CoV was associated with civet cats and MERS-CoV is transmitted by dromedary camels. Possible animal sources of COVID-19 has not yet been confirmed.

To protect yourself, such as when visiting live animal markets, avoid direct contact with animals and surfaces in contact with animals. Ensure good food safety practices at all times. Handle raw meat, milk or animal organs with care to avoid contamination of uncooked foods and avoid consuming raw or undercooked animal products.

17. Can I catch Covid-19 from my pet?

While there has been one instance of a dog being infected in Hong Kong, to date, there is no evidence that a dog, cat or any pet can transmit COVID-19. COVID-19 is mainly spread through droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or speaks. To protect yourself, clean your hands frequently and thoroughly.

18. How long does the virus survive on surfaces?

It is not certain how long the virus that causes COVID-19 survives on surfaces, but it seems to behave like other coronaviruses. Studies suggest that coronaviruses (including preliminary information on the COVID-19 virus) may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to

several days. This may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment).

If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others. Clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.

19. Is there something I should not do?

The following measures **ARE NOT** effective against COVID-19 and can be harmful:

- Smoking
- Wearing multiple masks
- Taking antibiotics

In any case, if you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing seek medical care early to reduce the risk of developing a more severe infection and be sure to share your recent travel history with your health care provider.

I don't think there is much to debate on from here on. It is rather a question of what we are going to do. MBA Boland will issue a practical plan of action for our member companies in order to manage, monitor and minimize the risk of COVID-19 infections in the construction industry. This however will be a document on its own to be posted on the premises. It can also be used as a discussion document during one of your Toolbox Talks.

It is time for clear and well-defined action now to face this global threat that tends to overwhelm us in our minds. Thus, before we all are going into a state of panic, let us start with simple and practical steps to inform, educate and train our employees to manage themselves with regards to the COVID-19 virus. If we don't do it, the virus will eventually take its toll amongst us by means of serious illness or even death in worst case scenarios.

Lets' work together to face this invisible enemy that threatens our society.

MBA Boland regards

WA Liebenberg

B.Sc. Agric. Hons(US), NADSAM Diploma (UNISA), MDP Diploma (UV)

SACPCMP Construction Health & Safety Manager (CHSM/304/2017)

SAIOSH Chartered Member (Member Number: 36756902)

MBA Boland

Sel: 079 501 9321; Tel: 021 - 863 3330; Fax: 021 - 863 3331

E - pos: safety@mbaboland.org.za



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CHSM
LAST CHECKED AT 5:20 PM (SAST) ON 29 JUL 2019
[VIEW DETAILS AT WWW.PRIVYSEAL.COM](http://WWW.PRIVYSEAL.COM)

WILLEM ALBERTUS LIEBENBERG
CHARTERED MEMBER
LAST CHECKED AT 3:10 PM (SAST) ON 1 AUG 2019
[VIEW DETAILS AT WWW.PRIVYSEAL.COM](http://WWW.PRIVYSEAL.COM)