



LOCAL UNION 853 SPRINKLER FITTERS OF ONTARIO

U.A. LOCAL 853 SPRINKLER & FIRE PROTECTION TRADE CENTRE
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March 24, 2020

Local 853 Members,

Local 853 continues to monitor the Covid-19 outbreak and its effect to our members and their families.

As most of you are aware, the Premier of Ontario yesterday held a press conference indicating that he was taking charge and implementing shutting down the Province except for essential services. During this press conference, he did speak on poor site conditions and the need for Contractors to “get their act together”.

The Premier indicated that he would release today his list of essential services. However, that list was released last night and quite frankly it was an extensive list including Fire Safety and Sprinkler Systems. Local 853 does provide essential services (emergency service and maintenance) but, in our opinion not all sectors should be considered essential. There was some confusion regarding interpretation of the list. The Ontario Government has indicated that all construction work and services including Demolition, services in the Industrial, Commercial, institutional (ICI) and Residential Sectors are Essential Services, so all sectors are business as usual.

We have had many calls with concerns from our members about being on these projects and we understand our members wish to continue to work to provide for themselves and their families.

Local 853 legally cannot shut down job sites, as this would constitute an illegal work stoppage. Only Governments through a declaration or General Contractors have this authority. What we can do and will be doing starting tomorrow is blitzing projects throughout the Province looking to identify sites with improper safety precautions in place. **These include hand sanitizer, hot and cold water for washing hands and the practice of safe distancing.**

In addition to that we are requesting our stewards, foremen and members to contact us with site pictures, dated with project names and locations so we can follow up. In addition to that if you feel that the General Contractor is not providing these precautions, every member has the right to contact the Ministry of Labour at **1-877-202-0008** and speak to an enforcement officer and voice your concerns.

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/guide-occupational-health-and-safety-act/part-v-right-refuse-or-stop-work-where-health-and-safety-danger>

We can't stress enough that our members follow all proper safety precautions including making sure hand sanitizer is available, hot and cold water for hand washing and the practice of safe distancing are being followed. We all need to take all necessary precautions regarding Covid -19 so we can get through this together.

In Solidarity,



Dale Hawrychuk

Business Manager



Craig Bezaire

Business Agent



Kevin Middlestadt

Business Agent