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Working During a declared Pandemic Water Quality and shared Hydro Science work

At all times maintain a diary of where you have been (QR scans)

Overview (Nominated person to access Water Quality Laboratory during Level three is: Amy Feck)

This procedure was developed during the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020. This should be read in conjunction with other SOP's, official government advice and Horizons Emergency Management directives. This SOP is jointly shared with NRP (Science) and ED (Hydro). For general advice refer to Horizons COVID page. For general advice refer to Horizons COVID page:

<https://horizonsregionalcouncil.sharepoint.com/SitePages/COVID-19.aspx> or the ministry of health website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/current-alert-level/>

[Also refer to the Horizon's Risk Management Plan 37 Working in a pandemic](#)



Precautions and basic hygiene

- **Stay home if you are sick** - Staying at home if you are sick is one way to stop any spread of COVID-19.
- **Practice good hygiene** - It is still important that we use basic hygiene measures, including washing your hands, coughing, or sneezing into your elbow and cleaning surfaces.
- **Keep track of where you have been** - Fast and effective contact tracing helps us to prevent any further spread of COVID-19 in New Zealand. You are encouraged to use the [NZ COVID Tracer app](#) for this purpose and enable the Bluetooth tracing function.
- **Wear a face covering** - Face coverings can help reduce the spread of COVID-19. At Alert Level 4 the wearing of **face covering is mandatory when visiting essential services including council offices and the lab.**
- **Maintain physical distancing** - Physical distancing is an important way we can protect ourselves against COVID-19.



Guidance and rules in each level are likely to change. Keep up to date with current government advice.



Risk Analysis

Current knowledge

- Currently, the incubation period of COVID-19 is assessed to be between 2 and 14 days.
- This means that if a person remains well 14 days (about 2 weeks) after contact with someone who has coronavirus, they are not contagious (it is possible to have contracted the disease but remain asymptomatic).
- Infection can be spread to people who are nearby (within 2 meters) such that droplets could be inhaled into the lungs.
- It is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface, object or

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the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a doorknob or shaking hands then touching own face)

- Covid-19 is highly infectious
- Covid-19 can cause serious illness and death
- Vaccines are currently shown to be 88% effective against infection to the delta variant and reduces the risk of hospitalizations.

Delta Variant

For the latest information please see:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/about-covid-19/covid-19-about-delta-variant>

- Delta can cause people to develop more serious COVID-19 illness than other variants of the virus
- People with a Delta infection are at higher risk of needing hospitalisation.
- The chance of infecting others such as within your household or other contacts is extremely high because Delta is so transmissible. It is estimated that on average, one person infected with Delta may infect 5 or 6 other people. This is how Delta outbreaks in places overseas have grown so rapidly.
- People with Delta infections carry much more virus (have a higher viral load) and for a longer period than those infected with the original virus or other variants.
- The time from exposure to the virus until first symptoms is shorter for the Delta variant. Some people may have no symptoms (asymptomatic) when infectious.

What are the symptoms?



Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to a range of other illnesses such as influenza and do not necessarily mean that you have COVID-19. Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Temporary loss of smell
- Sore throat
- Runny Nose
- **Difficulty breathing.**



Difficulty breathing is a sign of possible pneumonia and requires immediate medical attention.

General

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During the Pandemic it will not be business as usual. During level four all water quality programmes are suspended. During Level three programmes will start being brought online. This plan will change as we proceed through the levels and as more information come through.

- Working from home except of course approved field work
- One person per truck
- Management approval to visit a site (Get Home safe tracking essential)
- In level three, some runs will be considered as approved (refer below)
- Only one person in the lab calibrating and preloading chili bins
- Only one person in science shed
- Staff in the lab and science shed shall wear a mask during levels 3 and 4
- No overnight stays (affects Northern teams runs)
- No boats or helicopters, (affects Lake Programs)
- No “Cold calling” ring ahead of time and gain permission of landowners
- At all times maintain a diary of where you have been and who you have seen. **We strongly recommend the government QR scanner with blue tooth turned on.**

Before conducting field work

- Staff that need to work in the field must obtain permission from their Manager / Team Leader or nominated person of planned locations and approximate time of return to office or home.
- If visiting a site where it is likely a contractor or landowner may be present, please call them first and:
 - confirm access time and date
 - check if anyone will be near your area of work
 - explain what work you intend doing, and the precautions you will take
- If you are visiting sites controlled by other PCBU's you must always follow their protocols, unless their standards are less than is required by the Council's procedures
- Ensure you have PPE for the pandemic
 - Hand sanitiser
 - Sanitiser spray
 - Face masks
 - 10 liters of water to wash hands
 - Soap
 - Towel to dry hands
- If the site is in a public place, also sanitise all contact points on the shared external surfaces such as gates, latches etc., both on entry and exit.



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- Do not enter the lab during level three (Amy Feck is allowed only).

Contract tracing

As a staff member working in the field, you MUST keep a daily record of who you have been in contact within relation to your Council work – if you are identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, you will need to be able to provide this information to the Ministry of Health to enable contact tracing. We recommend downloading and using the government contact tracing app / QR scanner with Bluetooth turned on.


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Returning home

To stop the possible spread of COVID-19, it is important that when you return home after work, you take all the necessary precautions to ensure that you and everyone in your bubble are safe.


Here are five simple guidelines to follow:




No touching
When you return home, try not to touch anything until you have cleaned your hands properly.




Shoes
Remove your shoes, do not walk through the house with them on - leave them outside.





Items
Leave non-essential items at work and disinfect items you have used at work that you have to keep with you, e.g. mobile phones.



Clothes and bags
Place your clothes and bags in a container and wash in a hot washing machine cycle.



Shower
Have a shower and make sure to clean your hands, wrists, arms, neck, nails and areas that might have been exposed.

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Working During a declared Pandemic Water Quality and shared Hydro Science work

Accessing office/depot during pandemic

Pandemic Level	Operating principles
2 or Less	BAU: consider others, they may still wish to exercise physical distancing. Stay away if you have flu like symptoms.
3	Work from home where possible. Exercise physical distancing. Stagger smoko breaks. Limit face to face meetings. Management / EOC approval is required prior to entering an HRC office, the WQ Lab, or any depot for any reason. We still need to maintain Physical distancing. As such we need to know and manage how many staff are in each office.
4	<p>Management / EOC approval is required prior to entering an HRC office or depot for any reason. Accessing an HRC office or depot will be considered as a last resort and be undertaken by named essential staff only. Plan and prepare to reduce need to access an office or depot space. All effort needs be made to control the spread of the virus. Wash or disinfect hands prior to entering the office. Restrict access to one external door and minimise movements within the building. Treat both yourself and every surface as though they are infected. Wearing a face mask indoors (except your home) is mandatory.</p> <p>Avoid using bathroom and kitchen facilities where possible. Avoid touching surfaces with hands, sanitise your hands have before and after entering an office or room. Always cough into your arm or a tissue and discard tissue responsibly. Movements in and out of HRC offices will be monitored by EOC.</p>

Accessing Water Quality Lab during Pandemic

Pandemic Level	Operating principles
2 or Less	BAU: consider others, they may still wish to exercise physical distancing. Stay away if you have flu like symptoms.
3	The Laboratory is a confined space with little room to Physical distance. During Level three the Lab access will be limited. Ordinarily only one person will be nominated each day to access the Lab. This person will load all chilli bins and calibrate the AquaTrolls for all runs. This includes creating the runs in sampler and getting the sample numbers. A mask is to be always worn in the lab.
4	<p>Management / EOC approval is required prior to entering an HRC office, the WQ Lab, or any depot for any reason. Accessing an HRC office, WQ Lab, or depot will be considered as a last resort and be undertaken by named essential staff only. Plan and prepare to reduce need to access an office or depot space. All effort needs be made to control the spread of the virus. Wash or disinfect hands prior to entering the office. Unless a Tier One Compliance event occurs, it is unlikely the Lab will be accessed. Restrict access to one external door and minimise movements within the building. Treat both yourself and every surface as though they are infected.</p> <p>Avoid using bathroom and kitchen facilities where possible. Avoid touching surfaces with hands, sanitise your hands have before and after entering an office or room. Always cough into your arm or a tissue and discard tissue responsibly. Movements in and out of HRC offices will be monitored by EOC. Wear a face mask when meeting with people outside your bubble.</p>

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Staff or public contact during pandemic



Pandemic Level	Operating principles
2 or Less	BAU: consider others, they may still wish to exercise physical distancing. Stay away if you are feeling unwell.
3	Limit face to face meetings. Where possible keep to the 2 metre physical distancing guidelines. Wash hands with soap regularly. Maintain a log of all contacts for contact tracing. Use the Get Home Safe App and use the manual check in feature. Note: the name of person or meeting that took place.
4	<p>Management / EOC approval is required prior to staff having direct contact with the public. This approval may simply be for the duties you need to carry out. When approved staff are to follow strict physical distancing for any person who does not belong to your bubble (those you currently live with). Do not stand closer than 2m from anyone, if windy double this distance, or ensure there is a cross wind. Maintain a log of these face-to-face encounters and who you have met with. Wear a face mask when meeting with people outside your bubble.</p> <p>Wash hands thoroughly with soap regularly.</p>

Storage and use of vehicles

Pandemic Level	Operating principles
2 or Less	BAU
3	Keep vehicle full of fuel, and clean ready for repurposing in case of level 4 escalation. Sanitise hands with regularly, when entering vehicles. Store vehicles at your private residence unless directed otherwise. Vehicles are to be cleaned and high contact areas (steering wheel, hand brake, door handles) sanitised at the end of each day.
4	<p>Store vehicles at your private residence unless directed otherwise. Use only the single vehicle assigned to you. Do not swap vehicles unless you are authorised to.</p> <p>Do not access other vehicles for the purpose of sourcing equipment and spares, ask the person who is assigned that vehicle to do this for you if needed.</p>

Accessing monitoring sites during pandemic

Pandemic Level	Operating principles
2 or Less	BAU: consider others, they may still wish to exercise physical distancing. Stay away if you are feeling unwell. Use the get home safe app every time you are in the field.
3	A risk assessment needs to be done prior to visiting any site taking into consideration likely C19 transmission hot spots such as gates, handrails etc. Urban monitoring stations pose a higher risk due to movements of people out exercising etc. Only one person to be in a vehicle at any one time. Try to limit Vehicles to dedicated drivers only. Limit face to face meetings. Where possible keep to the 2 metre physical distancing guidelines. Wash hands with soap regularly. Use the Get home safe app to report your duties and intended time that you will be safely home. No "Cold Calling" call ahead and gain permission from landowners. Try to keep runs to regular staff members consider runs that require inductions and ensure only inducted staff perform those runs.
4	<p>Authorisation needs to be obtained from the department data manager or deputy before visiting any site. Only priority sites are to be visited (Flood warning, IVR, critical webcams, and supporting infrastructure). A</p>

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	<p>risk assessment needs to be done prior to visiting any site taking into consideration likely C19 transmission hot spots such as gates, handrails etc. Urban monitoring stations pose a higher risk due to movements of people out exercising etc. Only one person to be in a vehicle at any one time. Try to limit Vehicles to dedicated drivers only.</p> <p>Try to contact landowners especially if you need to pass through a few paddocks etc.</p> <p>Wash hands with soap and water prior to accessing a site.</p> <p>Where practical, access site via the nearest public road, duck through fences rather than having to touch gates. If opening a gate is unavoidable, disinfect gate after touching. Wash hands thoroughly prior to leaving each site. Wash hands thoroughly with soap regularly.</p>
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Refuelling vehicle during pandemic

Pandemic Level	Operating principles
2 or Less	BAU: consider others, they may still wish to exercise physical distancing. Stay away if you are feeling unwell.
3	Keep vehicle full of fuel in case of level 4 escalation. Wash hands with soap regularly. Where possible refuel locally, before leaving for a day in the field.
4	<p>Please take care in all areas where there are higher levels of 'people traffic' such as petrol stations. Try to refuel at the same fuel station near to your home. Ensure tank is full at the start or end of a day before leaving your local area. Wearing a face mask is mandatory on forecourts and inside the petrol station.</p> <p>Priority should be given to unmanned petrol stations to reduce human contact (consider the BP app to pay for fuel). Wash hands prior to touching anything at a petrol station.</p> <p>Open fuel cap. If pump attendants are present let them insert put pump nozzle and inform attendant that you will close the fuel cap yourself.</p> <p>Where possible, use the corner of fuel card to push eft pos buttons. Check fuel cap is closed, wash or disinfect both hands and fuel card before re-entering vehicle.</p>

Undertaking work that requires two staff on site

Pandemic Level	Operating principles
2 or Less	BAU
3	One person only in a vehicle, (Take two vehicles) maintain the physical distancing rules (2 metres). Record the contact in a dairy / covid tracer app.
4	Authorisation needs to be obtained from the department data manger or their deputy. A log must be maintained of who was working with who in case contact tracing is needed. In the event two staff are required onsite for safety reasons staff are to drive in separate vehicles to the site.

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	<p>Prior to starting works wash or disinfect hands. Do not touch your workmates vehicle, tools, or equipment and ensure you maintain a distance of at least two meters at all times.</p> <p>In the event a heavy item needs two people to lift onsite ensure that it is disinfected prior to being reloaded into a vehicle.</p>
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Hand washing and disinfecting surfaces

2 or Less	BAU
3	Refer to guidelines for level 4.
4	<p>According to NZ's Ministry of Health, hand washing often with soap and water for 20 seconds, then drying your hands for 20 seconds, is a vital practice needed to reduce the spread of covid-19.</p> <p>Carry a minimum of 10L of water, a cake of soap or liquid hand soap for hand washing. You will also need to carry disinfectant spray for the purpose of disinfecting those surfaces you have touched onsite that might lead to virus transmission such as gates and gate chains.</p> <p>Treat yourself and surfaces (gates etc) as though they are infected with C19. It is essential we change our behaviour to ensure we take the above precautions, as essential workers travelling large distances it is vital, we safeguard the communities we are travelling to and of course our colleagues and ourselves.</p>

Work Plan:

Preparations: (Working from home)

Date	Task	Who
31-08-2020=>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Fill in the Site Contact List spread sheet on Teams in the Environmental Monitoring channel. This is critical that we know who to contact prior to visiting a site. If we cannot contact a landowner or occupier prior to access, we do not sample that site. (Note public access sites are exempt) Ensure run guides are up to date Some organizations or councils may require copies of our pandemic response plans or other H&S details before allowing us on site. Each person doing a sample run are to contact all land owners and gain permission prior to visiting the site. (public reserves etc. are exempt) 	All ED and science staff

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01/09/2021	Amy to generate the sampling runs ready for Tuesday 07/09/2021 (Ohau / Waikawa, Estuary)	Amy Feck
31-08-2021 – 03-09-2021	Confirm labs and couriers are ready. Check whether courier drop offs are allowed at Marton.	Darren

Summary: One staff member to come to regional house on Thursday 02/09/2021 to prepare equipment for all runs the following week (09:00 – 10:00). Also, on 06/09/2021 (09:00 – 10:00, one staff member to come into regional house / lab to sort returned chilly bins from lab and pick up additional PPE for the field teams.

Tuesday through Thursday (7th - 9th September) One staff member to be on site between 07:30 – 09:30 in the water quality lab calibrating and prepping sampling equipment. With three other staff picking up their equipment from the carpark (not entering regional house or the lab) at staggered times. At the end of each day, the field staff will open the door to regional house and put their equipment in the foyer and then leave. No further access to regional house should be required. Access to another external shed (metal shed opposite WQ container) will also need to be accessed end of day by either one or two staff (Alivia Goldfinch and/or Kelly Le Quesne) to drop off samples in freezer each of these three days. Time in on site will be several minutes only, only one to enter at a time, surfaces to be wiped down following access.

Preparation for sampling requires access to **regional house**: Amy's Phone 021 2277 452

02-09-2021	<p>Subject to the time slot being approved by IMT (asking for 9:00am – 10:00am)</p> <p>Amy to come into regional house, always wearing a mask, she will access the hydro office between 09:00 – 09:30. This is to allow Amy to take iPad's, sample numbers, courier tickets, sample gloves downstairs to the WQ lab.</p> <p>Between 09:00 – 10:00 Amy will need access to the WQ lab, to setup stock in lab, prepare chilly bins for Tuesday, and ready the AquaTrolls for calibration.</p>	Amy Feck
06-09-2021	<p>Subject to the time slot being approved by IMT (asking for 9:00am – 10:00am)</p> <p>Amy to come into regional house, always wearing a mask, she will access the hydro office between</p>	Amy Feck

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	09:00 – 09:30. This is to allow Amy to take PPE to Lab. Between 09:00 – 10:00 Amy will need access to the WQ lab, to sort returned chilly bins from the lab.	
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Sampling run (Ohau, Waikawa, Estuary) requires access to the WQ Lab:

07-09-2021	Start at 07:30 Access is for the water quality lab only. Amy to calibrate 3 Aquatrolls. (One for estuaries higher conductivity standards), and prep for next day's runs. Layout two sets of sampling kit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black disks, clarity tubes • Calibrated AquaTrolls with iPad's • Chilly bins loaded with bottles • Sample books, numbers, courier stickers 	Amy Feck
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Sampling run (Ohau, Waikawa, Estuary) requires access to car park in the morning and regional house foyer for 2 minutes in the afternoon:

END OF DAY: Drop chilly bins off at courier, drop AquaTrolls in the foyer of regional house (chilly bin) after 3:30 pm. (this time slot is prebooked for returning field workers to drop equipment off)

Date / Time pick regional house	Run	Staff / Phone	Vehicle
07-09-2021 08.15	Ohau -Waikawa SoE Run 1	Alivia Goldfinch 021 2277 291	VP1542
07-09-2021 08:30 2 x aquatrolls (1 for estuary)	Ohau -Waikawa SoE Run 2 And Estuary run	Kelly Le Quesne 021 2277 423	VP1451

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Sampling run (Upper Rangitikei SoE and Discharge) requires access to the WQ Lab:

08-09-2021	<p>Start at 07:30 Access is for the water quality lab only. Amy to calibrate 3 Aquatrolls. (One for estuaries higher conductivity standards), and prep for next day's runs.</p> <p>Layout two sets of sampling kit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black disks, clarity tubes • Calibrated AquaTrolls with iPad's • Chilly bins loaded with bottles • Sample books, numbers, courier stickers 	Amy Feck
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Sampling run (Upper Rangitikei SoE and Discharge) requires access to car park in the morning and regional house foyer for 2 minutes in the afternoon:

END OF DAY: Drop chilly bins off at courier, drop AquaTrolls in the foyer of regional house (chilly bin) after 3:30 pm. (this time slot is prebooked for returning field workers to drop equipment off)

Date / Time pick regional house	Run	Staff / Phone	Vehicle
08-09-2021 08:15	Rangitikei Periphyton	Kelly Le Quesne 021 2277 423	VP1451
08-09-2021 08:30	Upper Rangitikei Discharge	Darren Bentley-Hewitt 021 2277 134	VP1478
08-09-2021 08:45	Upper Rangitikei SoE	Craig Beaven 021 2277 147	VP1437

Sampling run (East coast and Lower Rangitikei SoE) requires access to the WQ Lab:

09-09-2021	<p>Start at 07:30 Access is for the water quality lab only. Amy to calibrate 3 Aquatrolls. (One for estuaries higher conductivity standards), and prep for next day's runs.</p>	Amy Feck
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	Layout two sets of sampling kit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black disks, clarity tubes • Calibrated AquaTrolls with iPad's • Chilly bins loaded with bottles • Sample books, numbers, courier stickers 	
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Sampling run (East coast, Lower Rangitikei) requires access to car park in the morning and regional house foyer for 2 minutes in the afternoon:

END OF DAY: Drop chilly bins off at courier, drop AquaTrolls in the foyer of regional house (chilly bin) after 3:30 pm. (this time slot is prebooked for returning field workers to drop equipment off)

Date / Time pick regional house	Run	Staff / Phone	Vehicle
09-09-2021 08:15	East Coast	Kelly Le Quesne 021 2277 423	VP1451
09-09-2021 08:30	Lower Rangitikei SoE	Micah Dodge 021 2477 334	VP1519
09-09-2021 08:45	Lower Rangitikei Discharge	Darren Bentley-Hewitt 021 2277 134	VP1478
09-09-2021 09:00	Lower Rangitikei Periphyton (Periphyton only run, Chilli bin and slicker pads only needed)	Alivia Goldfinch 021 22 77 291	VP1542

Horizons: Environmental Data and Science Programme Status Summary

As at 1-September-2021

Programmes Current status:	Core ED Functions																
	Flood / IVR	Consents	Webcams	ED sites	Survey	Flow meters	Manual GW	SoE Surface	SoE Ground	SoE Lakes	Periphyton	Macroinverts	Contract WQ	Swim Spots	Fish	Coastal	ESR Trial
Current Level: 3 Level 3 - Restrict Heightened risk that disease is not contained	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	Boating not permitted under level 3. No Helicopter sampling	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle inform all parties of status	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle
Level 0 - No Pandemic										Programme under review							Programme now on hold
Level 1 - Prepare Disease is contained													Inform contract managers of our limitations	Inform and discuss with mid central health			
Level 2 - Reduce Disease is contained, but risks of community transmission growing	Clean and maintain sites in prep for extended period without access to site	Clean and maintain sites in prep for extended period without access to site	Ensure key EM webcams are operational, batteries etc	Clean and maintain sites in prep for extended period without access to site		Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date	Check and ensure run guides are up to date
Level 3 - Restrict Heightened risk that disease is not contained	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	Boating not permitted under level 3. No Helicopter sampling	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle inform all parties of status	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle	one person per vehicle
Level 4 - Eliminate Likely that disease is not contained	Permission required from EOC	Only when directed by EOC	Only when directed by EOC	Cease activity	Cease activity	Cease activity	Cease activity	Cease activity	Cease activity	Cease activity	Cease activity	Cease activity	Cease activity inform contract partners this can affect consents	Cease activity inform mid central health	Cease activity	Cease activity	Cease activity