



# Concrete Atlantic is still open for business

## President's message

**Kevin Nickerson,**  
President, Atlantic Concrete Association

"It has been an unusual Spring this year, for sure. With the world's fears around Covid-19 and the closure of most economies around the world, it's certainly made "business as usual" a challenge for most.

Concrete Atlantic remains available for you during this unprecedented time. We are toggling hours back and forth between the office and home, in order to obey distancing rules. We remain available by email at any time.

Unfortunately, we've been forced to postpone our spring line up of education. Refunds have been sent out to everyone that signed up. It is our intention to reschedule our courses as soon as we are able to gather in groups again.

Our board meetings have had to evolve into video conferences in order to comply with the by-laws. It has been a unique challenge, but everyone has stepped up and embraced the new technology.

Going forward, the Summer Family Fun and board meeting has been placed on hold for this year. Should restrictions lighten in time for a summer gathering, Pam and Lisa will put together an event geared to get us all together again.

Based on current projections for the fall, we have also made the difficult deci-

sion to cancel the golf tournament. The courses will likely re-open, but our ability to gather is expected to remain constricted for the foreseeable future. These decisions must be made long in advance in order to allow enough time for cancellations with our venues.

Looking further down the road, we have also decided that travel to the US is ill-advised for February 2021 and have amended plans to travel to Las Vegas for our AGM. Preparations are in the works for another event, with an Atlantic Canadian location. Stay tuned for details as the projections for quarantine and social distancing unfold.

In the meantime, Pam has been preparing letters for members of government, encouraging construction to continue during the pandemic. It is important to mention that proper safety protocols must be respected during this time. Social distancing and proper hygiene remain our best defence against the spread of this virus.

In closing, we would like to congratulate everyone in our industry for keeping their businesses up and running during this time. We know it has been an unusual obstacle, but our numbers of new cases of Covid-19 are beginning to diminish and a light at the end of this tunnel is more visible every day.

Stay strong, stay safe and we will meet again in the not too distant future with many new stories to tell one another."

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Atlantic Concrete Association  
Association béton Atlantique

Publication Mail Agreement #40064799

Atlantic Concrete Association (ACA)  
Association béton Atlantique (AbA)

Produced for ACA/AbA by Advocate Media Inc.

(Formerly Atlantic Provinces Ready Mixed Concrete Association)

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: below return address  
301-3845 Joseph Howe Dr., Halifax, NS B3L 4H9

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# Another Successful ConAtlantic Gathering

In February, Concrete Atlantic and the American Concrete Institute (Atlantic Chapter) held the 2020 ConAtlantic Conference and Annual General Meetings in Charlottetown, PEI.

We were very fortunate to have the opportunity to host the event just before the Covid-19 quarantine took effect. Other organizations have not been so lucky.

We enjoyed a successful event with plenty of networking and educational opportunities for our colleagues. We also enjoyed a little fun at the social events giving all our members that chance to connect with representatives of the concrete industry.

We started off ConAtlantic Friday morning with a breakfast welcome to all attendees, sponsors and speakers from Charlottetown Mayor Phillip Brown.

The plenary session kicked off next and focused on how strong competition from the wood industry impacts concrete. Four panel guests spoke to the most relevant issues facing the industry, as a whole. Discussions around insurance, building inspection, legal and environmental concerns with decision-makers choosing

wood as a building material over concrete were well received. It was informative for our delegates and it provided a better understanding of the benefits of our product over wood.

After enjoying a great keynote address with PEI Premier Dennis King, the group was separated into two rooms for discussions ranging from expert advice on legal contracts and their implications on plant owners, to technical sessions focused on day to day issues facing concrete plants.

Our social events went perfectly, with spouses visiting Founder's Hall and sampling treats made by local artisans. On Saturday, following our AGMs, the group attended UpStreet Brewery for craft beer, snacks and some awesome trivia. We finished things off with a laugh, watching as The Mattman hypnotised some of our guests while we enjoyed our President's dinner.

We acknowledge the Herculean efforts of the ConAtlantic committee in making our 2020 ConAtlantic such a success!

It may be a while before our industry can gather again, but we are looking forward to that day.



Shawn Mills accepting the 2020 Hockey Tournament trophy from Doug MacLean.



Mayor of Charlottetown Philip Brown Philip gave the opening welcomes at breakfast.



PLENARY SESSION: "Sell with Confidence – Concrete's Examination of the Claims of the Wood Initiative" Introducing our Panel: Carter Livingston (Town of Stratford; Steve Bates (Stanhope Simpson Insurance); Jamie MacNeil (Boyne Clarke) and Adam Auer (Cement Association Canada). Right: Moderator, J.T. Nugent, Conquest Engineering





Luncheon Speaker, PEI Premier Dennis King.

Back: Jamie Reid, Bruce Casey, Steve Peters, Shawn Miller Front: Kent Nickerson, Kevin Nickerson, Chris Miller Missing: Travis Richard, Travis Smith, Darren Cross, Jack Brenton.

## Cement Association of Canada is out there promoting the product

Government contracts for capital projects represent 40 to 45 per cent of the concrete/cement industry in Canada. Ongoing lobbying by the industry to governments at all three levels is continuous, therefore, but has been stepped up through the covid19 crisis, says Michael McSweeney President and CEO of the Cement Association of Canada in Ottawa. Every major municipality, every province, and the federal government are all in the loop.

Concrete is the “most ubiquitous” building material out there, he says, and the construction industry will play a vital role in the economic recovery, that hopefully will commence in the second half of this year. Having projects planned and “shovel ready” ahead of time will put people back to work quicker. Only Quebec failed to designate the construction industry as an “essential service” he said—and concrete impacts the whole supply chain across the board. Not much happens without concrete.

Ultimately architects and engineers determine which building materials will be used on which projects, he said, but the industry is busy making the case for concrete.

It's a local industry. Materials, including sand and gravel, are sourced locally, and mixed and transported locally.

Low short-term cost, he argues, produces low quality and high energy consumption. He makes the point that the extreme durability of concrete renders it tremendously cost-effective in the long run. It also scores well on environmental sustainability.

The industry monitors national concrete sales year over year to determine its effectiveness in promoting its product.



The sessions also included lots of time for social interaction and networking among participants.



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## BUILD WITH STRENGTH ATLANTIC CANADA

# Getting the message out (and you can participate)

*ConcreteTracker* is a collection of concrete building and paving case studies assembled by the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA) in the United States.

There are hundreds of projects built using a certain concrete system all over the country in every climate zone.

The intent is to promote the use of concrete products for buildings due to their strength, durability and long-term value.

The mission is to educate the building and design communities and policy-makers on the benefits of ready mixed concrete, and encourage its use as the building material of choice for low- to mid-rise structures. Building owners, developers, architects, engineers and others interested in seeing a concrete building near them can search the map and get information about a concrete building or paving

project. NRMCA's Concrete Design Centre can help select the best concrete solution for your building or paving project.

National Ready Mixed Concrete Association spokesman Lionel Lemay in Chicago gave us some insight into the program...

### When did this project commence in the US?

*We launched ConcreteTracker.org in 2018. Until now we did not crowd source projects, but would hire a summer intern to scour the internet for projects or have people suggest projects to us and we would upload the data to the map.*

### When was an invitation extended to Canada to participate?

*We launched the crowd sourcing option in April, where people could upload pro-*



*jects using an upload form. At that point we included Canadian projects. We're looking for more.*

### Are you interested only in innovative projects?

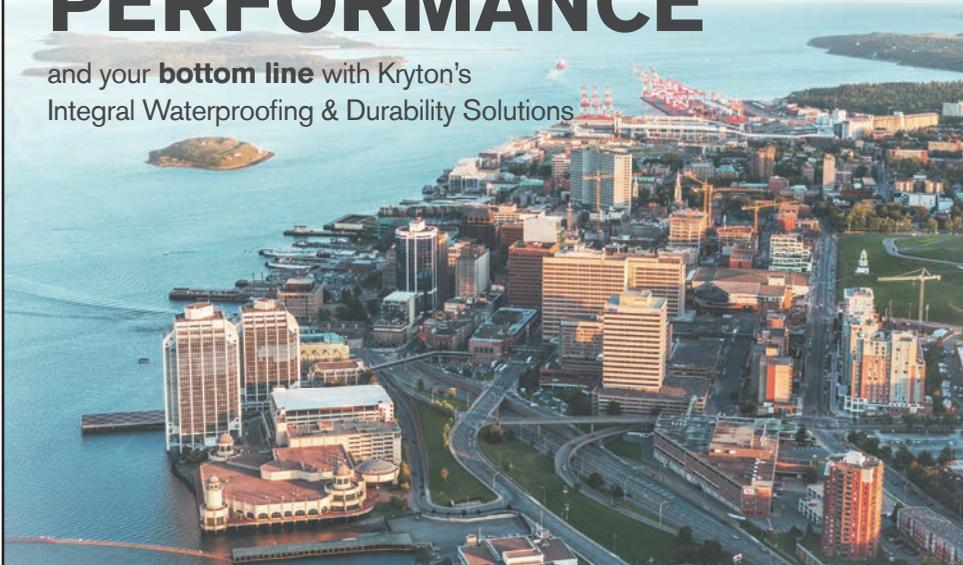
*Projects don't have to be innovative. It helps and tells a more compelling story if they are, but most projects in real life are not innovative. What we really want is some detail about why concrete was selected. What problem was solved. What benefit did concrete provide to the owner, etc. The main reason for Concrete Tracker is to demonstrate to an owner or design professional that there are projects using concrete for buildings, parking lots and streets in your area. Or there are dozens or hundreds of projects built using a certain concrete system all over the country in every climate zone. Instead of having hundreds of "paper" case studies, this map permits us to show someone where the projects are, and they can even get directions to the project or view the project in Google street view.*

### In Canada at least- there has been a strong lobby for wood in low/mid-rise buildings. Is this a concern? Was it a motivation for Concrete Tracker?

*Concrete Tracker was partly conceived to demonstrate that there were many multifamily buildings being built with concrete also. As we try to convince developers that concrete is a cost effective option, we also want to demonstrate that they will not be the guinea pig. Many of the projects on the map are built using Insulating Concrete Forms, and some would consider it to be a new system. The map demonstrates that is nearly mainstream now with developers, hotel owners, universities are building with ICFs. Another example is schools. Many school districts are opting to build schools with ICFs for economy, energy efficiency and safety. We can use the map to demonstrate the sheer number of projects, even if we can't capture all of them. By going to crowd sourcing however, we should be able to capture more.*

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# Staying safe at work

Health and safety guidelines in the cement and concrete industry

The Canadian cement and concrete industry has prepared this document to contribute to the protection of its workers and customers from COVID-19. It is based on information provided by Canadian health authorities. The application of health and safety measures that each company imposes must always comply with local regulations and the instructions of local health authorities.

COVID-19 is a virus with serious complications, possibly fatal, especially in older people or those with compromised immune systems. It can be contagious for up to 14 days, even if the infected person has no symptoms. The virus is transmitted either through close personal contact with an infected person—through respiratory droplets generated by talking, coughing or sneezing—or by touching contaminated objects or surfaces and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes. Current evidence suggests person-to-person spread is most prevalent when there is close contact with other people.

The following guidelines are to keep employees of cement and concrete product manufacturers safe and to help stop the spread of COVID-19. They are based on advice and directives from Canada's health authorities (federal and provincial).

We encourage you to read, follow and discuss these guidelines with your co-workers and family. It is through rigorous adherence to these guidelines that we can "plank the curve" of the COVID-19 virus.

Please note that federal and provincial guidelines will evolve over the course of the pandemic. Please be sure to consult national and provincial health authorities listed in this document for the latest information.

## OPERATORS OF TRUCKS, VEHICLES, HEAVY AND MOBILE EQUIPMENT

1. If you have COVID-19 related symptoms (fever, dry cough or breathing difficulty), do not come to work and contact your supervisor. If any of these symptoms appear during your working day, report immediately to your immediate superior and alert health agencies where you live for instructions.

2. If you have an underlying medical condition or a compromised immune system, advise your supervisor so that you may be protected.

Conduct the COVID-19 Self-Assessment provided by your provincial government on a daily basis, to ensure you are symptom-free before coming to work.

3. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 - 30 seconds. If you do not have access to soap and water, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content until you can wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

4. As much as possible, practice physical distancing. As advised by Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, keep a safe distance of at least 2 arms lengths (about 2 meters) from others.

5. When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth with your folded elbow or with disposable tissues, even if you are alone, as you can contaminate surfaces, items or equipment that other people can then use. Dispose of the used tissue and wash your hands for 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer immediately.

6. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth to prevent the spread of germs.

7. Use any protective equipment provided by your employer. Ensure it is discarded after use if it is disposable.

8. Change your clothing when arriving and leaving work and remember to immediately wash all your work clothes after every shift. Our companies will increase the frequency of washing overalls and other work clothes

9. Drink water frequently and be careful to use your own containers and utensils to eat (cups, dishes and cutlery). Do not bring in food to share with others.

10. Upon receipt and before handing over for the next shift, disinfect keys, phones, radios, shared tools and other items that have been assigned for your work.

## IN THE CAB

1. Begin and end each shift by clean-

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ing your vehicle cab with a disinfectant. Clean and disinfect the steering wheel, frequently used levers, buttons and radio controls, seats and in general anything you usually touch with your hands.

2. When cleaning the cab, it is advisable to let it ventilate (10 minutes).

Use gloves to protect hands when exposed to ladders and guardrails.

3. Ensure each truck is equipped with hand sanitizers and disinfectant spray at all times.

4. When driving, keep windows half open for ventilation.

5. Do not operate or board equipment that has not been specifically assigned to you. When possible, equipment should be assigned to one person and cleaning schedules implemented between workers and as needed.

### DURING THE LOADING AND UNLOADING OF CONCRETE PRODUCTS IN PLANT AND ON SITE

1. Always make responsible use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including gloves, face masks and safety glasses. Remember that we are living in a COVID-19 pandemic. *continued on page 6*

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**2.** Use gloves to protect hands on guardrails, ladders, levers, chutes or any tool that someone else may have touched. Remember not to touch your face while using any of these, and to wash your hands once finished.

**3.** Implement "no touch" transactions to avoid the exchange of paperwork, pens, receipts or signatures. As much as possible, use technology to communicate where you used paper products in the past.

**4.** Try and keep a physical distance of at least two arms lengths (2 metres) from other people and respect this minimum distance in all common areas such as waiting rooms, dining rooms and work sites.

**5.** Avoid crowds and situations where you are around more people than the limit mandated by public health authorities. This number may differ for each province and is subject to change at any time, so please consult your provincial health authority listed at the end of this document.

**6.** Stay in your truck as long as possible. If waiting time is prolonged, it is better that you stay isolated inside the vehicle and continue with the necessary hygiene precautions. Before eating anything, you should wash your hands with soap and water or a hand sanitizer.

**8.** Never share personal protective equipment (PPE), pens or other writing instruments or mobile devices.

**9.** Customers, pump operators or Quality Control technicians should not touch the truck or equipment, including hoses, chutes, rails, ladders.

#### GUIDANCE FOR CEMENT AND CONCRETE PRODUCERS

It is important for cement and concrete product companies to adapt this guidance to their own company requirements, and to make customers aware of the situation, both for their own protection and that of employees.

**1.** Follow the recommendations of your provincial health authorities (see website links at the end of this document) and keep your staff informed.

**2.** Follow the health and safety guidance/instructions provided by your HR/Health and Safety Officers.

**3.** Encourage employees to identify any underlying medical condition or compromised immune system so that

you may take action to minimize or eliminate their exposure. Set up disinfection crews for vehicles and work tools especially on shift changes.

**4.** Implement policies for the delivery of tickets that minimize driver-client interaction. Some companies have temporarily suspended the signing of delivery tickets by customers and have used unilateral receipt documents which include customer details. Give a hygiene kit (disinfectant liquid soap, bottle caps and bottle of alcohol) to each worker.

**5.** Implement policies that minimize the contact of staff in the plant with doorknobs or handles, which may have fingerprints, etc., and facilitate reminders to staff to wash their hands frequently.

**6.** Organize sites to allow for greater air circulation where people gather (e.g. open tents for ticket delivery and registration), allowing the minimum physical distance of two arms lengths or 2 metres between them. Do not allow gathering in groups larger than that mandated by your provincial health authorities.

**7.** Reduce access to places not strictly required for work and, where possible, separate the jobs.

**8.** Practise physical distancing, even during safety meetings or Tool Box Talks.

**9.** Avoid shared tools and equipment and implement cleaning schedules between shifts if required.

**10.** As much as possible, establish work shifts to minimize the concentration of staff, and ask people to work from home, if possible.

**11.** Establish isolation protocols in the plant and procedures for transfer to homes or hospitals of employees with any symptoms of COVID-19.

**12.** Ensure critical task safety certificates are valid for at least six months to avoid expiration.

**13.** Other measures include: Locking doors to offices and shops to prevent unauthorized entry (do not block exits); encouraging plant personnel to respectfully re-direct drivers and internal personnel out of control rooms; posting signage that provides the site contact number for anyone needing access to site, such as haulers, delivery services, contractors, vendors, etc.; asking all new incoming employees, contractors and essential visitors to complete a screening questionnaire.

**14.** Wherever possible, develop illustra-



tive advice leaflets, and start COVID-19 training days to provide correct information.

**15.** Consult federal or provincial authorities regularly for updated information and resources including, Canada.ca/coronavirus .

#### THE FOLLOWING SHOULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED

**1.** Developing a plan in the event an employee tests positive for COVID-19.

Use government resources to ensure best practices are followed and actions are communicated to employees.

**2.** Reminding all employees of the need to follow federal and provincial self-isolation mandates when returning from international or interprovincial travel.

**3.** Allowing non-essential administration employees to work from home.

Not allowing visitors to access any cement or concrete product plants without prior approval by management.



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## Welcome back **Jessica Higgins Waite** to the Atlantic concrete community!

Jessica Waite Higgins, P.Eng. is a Materials Engineer out of our Dartmouth, Nova Scotia office. Jessica is very excited to be back in Atlantic Canada and is looking forward to connecting again with her clients and colleagues in the industry. Contact her today for any of your concrete consulting needs by emailing [jessica.waitehiggins@stantec.com](mailto:jessica.waitehiggins@stantec.com) or by phone at (902) 877-1635 — she'd love to hear from you!



# The Covid19 calamity

As with virtually every other industry out there, we have been dramatically impacted by ongoing covid19 pandemic and the necessary precautions required to combat it. The concrete industry has collaborated with related industries in navigating these measures.

Concrete Atlantic is pleased to be involved in the COVID Safety Coalition. The Coalition is an initiative to ensure communications around safety between the province and the construction industry is ongoing. In terms of this Covid Safety Coalition, M.J. MacDonald, CEO of the Construction Safety Association, had this to say;

"I am very excited that a diverse groups consisting of labour, Labour relations, construction association, road builders, concrete sector, and home builders, have come together to share information and to resolve issues in a collaborative way. Through working together, we are more effective and efficient for our members and for the betterment of all people working in the industry, who we want to ensure, are safe each day they come to work."

Collaboration has also been sought with municipal governments in an effort to assure construction projects continue wherever feasible, and recommence as quickly as possible.



Your executive, from left: Jamie Reid (Past president), Chris Miller (VP), Steve Peters (Treasurer), Kevin Nickerson (President), Pam Woodman (Executive Director)

From Kevin Nickerson, Concrete Atlantic President

"There's no such thing as downtime when it comes to concrete, as is evident with the continued efforts to promote our industry through this

on-going, nation-wide communication initiative is geared toward all levels of government. It illustrates, to policy makers, that proper safety procedures are being observed, and that the concrete industry is open

for business. It also recommends that supporting infrastructure projects in Atlantic Canada is a positive step toward stimulating our local economy during these difficult times."

*continued on page 8*



## UPDATE YOUR TRAINING OR RENEW A CERTIFICATION

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The following letter has been sent to municipal leaders around the region. It is signed by Peter Moylan, President, Concrete Canada and Pam Woodman, Executive Director, Concrete Atlantic.

*"We are writing on behalf of the concrete industry in the Atlantic Provinces to ask for your support in stimulating local construction activity as you continue to mitigate the unprecedented health and economic impacts of COVID-19.*

*In these difficult times, it is vital that all levels of government continue to stimulate local economic activity by proceeding with infrastructure projects that will get local*

Concrete Atlantic is pleased to be involved in the COVID Safety Coalition. The Coalition is an initiative to ensure communications around safety between the province and the construction industry is ongoing

*construction businesses back in operation and employees back to work.*

*More than ever, shovel-ready projects and simplified procurement and tendering processes will be of immediate advantage in stimulating your local construction activity and important economic supply-chain channels.*

*Cement and concrete is a domestic industry with a strong local presence in virtually all Canadian communities... We are an important part of your local economic structure supporting more than 9,000 direct and indirect jobs in Atlantic Canada.*

*We have implemented extraordinary*

*measures to support your efforts and those of local health authorities to stop the spread of COVID-19. Our new health and safety protocols are designed to protect our employees and the communities in which they operate.*

*We are committed to working with you and our provincial and federal partners to stimulate local economic activity and your municipality's shovel-ready infrastructure projects. Please contact Concrete Atlantic at pam@atlanticconcrete.ca or 902 489-2000 your earliest convenience so that we can discuss how we can best work through this unprecedented crisis together."*



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The Ready Mix News reaches every segment of the concrete industry and its members are the key decision makers and influencers in the Atlantic Concrete industry reaching government, research, producers, suppliers and operations.

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