

Meeting Minutes—Monday, August 31, 2020
Zoom conference 1900-2040

Attendees:

Patrol Directors: Mike Smarz (Mohawk); Ken Joyce (Pahquioque); Justin Lonergan (Powder Ridge); Ron Fenner (Southington); Bob Cassello (Alumni); **Assistant Patrol Directors/NSP Reps:** Eric Schmidt (Pahquioque); Kevin Muravnick (Powder Ridge); **Medical Advisors:** Melinda Mingus (E.D Medical Advisor); Steve Goldblatt (Ski Sundown Medical Advisor); **Guests:** Paula Knight; Rick Knight; Charlie Epstein; Marge Thorpe; Jenny O'Donnell; **CT Region Admin:** Larry Hyatt (Administrative Assistant); Sue-Ellen Repeta (Pequot Section Chief); Mark Pahmer (Alternate Region Director); Skip Mudge (RD)

ACTION ITEMS

- **Skip:** Confirm which Zoom account to be used for Sept 19 event and publish invitation on website
- **Melinda Mingus:** Track down Safety Tent for use on Sept 19
- **Sue-Ellen:** Check with hospital regarding washer/dryer requirements to properly disinfect clothing.
- **All Patrol Directors:** Provide New Member information (candidates who have passed OEC, OET) for inclusion on the website; Review open positions and encourage patrollers to participate at the region level.

→ Please review and act upon the Action Items from last month's (July 27) meeting minutes. I will follow up with each of you between now and our next meeting. We will include a review of all Action Items at the beginning of each Zoom meeting.

Administrative Announcements

Website: Please check the website and make sure your patrol information is current and accurate. Photos and other information should be sent to John Segretta or Skip Mudge. There is also a "New member" section on our website where new candidate achievements (OEC and OET at this time) are posted. So far Pahquioque and Sundown have listed members from the past year, other patrols are encouraged to do the same.

Open Region Positions: We are looking for a CT Region Historian, Outdoor Risk Management (ORM) Advisor, and Administrative Assistant, which Larry Hyatt, as meeting co-host, is trying out tonight. Let's hope he accepts the challenge.

CT Region Awards Presentation: scheduled for Sat 9/19/20 at Mt Southington, no food or beverages will be served. With current pandemic environment, events are limited to 25 people inside and 100 people outside, so we are very limited this year. Invitations were sent to Patrol Directors and those who will be receiving significant awards. The meeting will be Zoomed and recorded with a copy to be available on the website.

Discussions

Melinda reported that the Eastern Division Medical Advisory Committee hasn't met in the past month and a half. The COOPED-UP Committee has sent out guidelines. NSP has issued guidelines which offer some recommendations as well as the importance of following Local, State and CDC guidelines—stay flexible as these change as more information is made available.

The Region website has posted these updated PPE recommendations which discouraged neck gaiters, bandanas and balaclavas and recommended 3-layer cloth or surgical face mask on the hill and surgical or N95 face mask when treating patients. Melinda stressed that more research is needed and the issue of neck gaiters is still open; N95's need careful handling as their effectiveness could be damaged without adequate protection (i.e., rigid case); administering O2 is considered an aerosolizing event and a N95 should be used along with goggles, face shield, gloves, etc. These items should be included in trauma kit.

An open discussion took place about safe handling of the various items concerning the current pandemic.

- N95 masks should ideally be fit tested to ensure full effectiveness. Patrols represented in the meeting reported they are not currently planning fit testing. Paula mentioned that Ed McNamara has made fit test kits available. They cost about \$35, plus the cost of the chemicals. Training is easy, just about anyone can be trained. Contact Ed

if interested.

- The CT area management teams have been meeting to discuss the upcoming season and how things will be handled. Nothing has been published yet. They are considering issues such as ticket pre-sales, outside dining, plexiglass partitions in rental area. School groups, and racing is still somewhat of an unknown. A joint report may be delivered on 9/9. This will be presented to the state for consideration.
- Pahquioque is awaiting similar recommendations from the New York ski areas by the end of September. Ron offered to share a copy of the CT report with Ken Joyce.
- Justin reports that the Summer Bike Patrol has been running smoothly, and has been working closely with management. A main emphasis has been on dealing with issues inside the buildings, thinking that people will not be able to hang out in the lodge/restaurant/bar while family members are on the hill. Outdoor dining options will be expanded. They are also waiting to see what happens as schools re-open. Pahquioque is considering reserved-only tables in the restaurant (possibly 45-minute reservation blocks).
- Powder Ridge uses Vital Oxide disinfectant which also can be used as a hand sanitizer. Other ski areas are considering Vital Oxide as well. A quick “Google” search indicates that it is a safe, hospital grade disinfectant, however it may irritate the eyes.
- Marge talked about her work at Alpine Haus. With only three employees in the store, it was uncomfortable when five family groups came in. In their rental area, they hang 4x8 foot plexiglass sheets from the ceiling. The customer sits on one side and the boot fitter on the other side. Skis and poles are measured in the same manner, with customer and fitter on opposite sides of the plexiglass.
- Ron mentioned that Mt Southington is planning to separate the patient area from the break room, remove a bunk in patient area providing more space between patients and replace privacy curtains with plexiglass. They are also considering a tent just outside the patrol room for triage and treating minor injuries.
- Ken raised the issue of maintaining records of individual employee temperatures, record retention times and possible privacy issues. The consensus was that it would probably be acceptable to simply indicate that an individual’s COVID-19 screening results at the beginning of their shift was “acceptable”. We don’t know if the ski areas will want all employees assessed and/or tested, and if so, how often and who is to administer the testing. Melinda noted that only 20% of COVID-19 patients present with an elevated temperature. Perhaps we’re using this assessment technique because it is cheap, easy and generally accepted. Elevated temperatures can indicate many things, and are not considered a reliable COVID-19 specific indicator (although, of course, anyone with an elevated temperature should not be on duty, regardless of the reason). Most virologists consider one COVID-19 test to be meaningless, it takes three consecutive “negative” COVID-19 test results to consider someone COVID-free. Steve mentioned that for cardiac patients in his hospital, a test is considered to be valid for seven days. Melinda shared an optimistic note regarding Abbott’s rapid saliva testing that was deployed in about 50 locations in NYC this past week. Results in less than ten minutes. This could change the manner and frequency of our testing.

Discussed the survey sent out by the Eastern Division COOPED-UP team, to gather information from patrollers and instructors on their plans for participating this upcoming season. Information was not available on the individual areas. Some patrollers are waiting to hear what the ski area is planning to do to keep them safe before deciding to patrol this season. We’re volunteers and many of us can’t risk being out of work due to quarantine, or worse. Also, there is concern of bringing COVID-19 home to family members, some of who may have comorbidities. *[Just as we were about to issue these minutes, the Division released the results of the COOPED-UP Survey. Links to these results were sent out to each Patrol Director on 9/4/20]*

Steve and Kathy Fitzpatrick presented recommendations to management (copies shared with this group last month). They have yet to do the joint management/patrol walk-through (top shack, base, etc.) to evaluate flow and other considerations. Expect this to happen soon.

Regarding PPE, surgical face masks and face shields are readily available, but N95s and gowns are not readily available right now, but hope to be in near future.

Some areas are discussing the acquisition of washers and dryers to do onsite washing/disinfecting of items such as blankets. Will any household washer/dryer properly disinfect or would it require a commercial grade washer/dryer? Sue-Ellen will check on that at the hospital. Discussion also took place on handling contaminated patroller clothing. Justin mentioned bike patrollers are asked to bring an extra set of clothes. During summer operations, that is easy to do. Discussion took place on options for winter with things like ski pants and jackets. One option might be to spray Vital Oxide (or other disinfectant) on clothing, preferably while person is not wearing it. Question: will it damage Gore-Tex? Vital Oxide requires about 15-20 minutes of wet time. Sue-Ellen shared a document addressing some fogging, spraying and misting issues published by the CT DPH. See attached.

Steve asked if there should be individual task force teams to look into all issues (lift chairs, patrol room, lodge, etc.). This is such a large, complex issue that we need to focus on the patrol aspect (which is large enough as it is) and offer our expertise to our areas' management teams.

Next meeting: Monday, September 21 at 1900

“Schools are like cruise ships on land.” Melinda Mingus, M.D.

Adjourned 8:40PM

Respectively submitted,

Larry Hyatt, Skip Mudge

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Acting Commissioner



Ned Lamont
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Connecticut Reopening FAQ
Disinfectant Fogging/ Spraying/ Misting in Office Buildings and Schools

Question: What is disinfectant fogging/misting/spraying?

Answer: Disinfectant fogging, misting, or spraying refers to the process of distributing a liquid disinfection chemical into the air and surfaces inside a building (or less frequently in outdoor areas) by means of a mechanical device.

Question: What is the difference between disinfectant foggers, misters, and sprayers?

Answer: Several types of mechanical devices are used to distribute liquid disinfectants widely inside facilities. Whether those devices are referred to as foggers, misters, or sprayers generally depends on the size of the droplets the device creates. The size of those droplets usually determines how much disinfectant is being deposited and how long the droplets are suspended in the air (or how quickly they fall onto surfaces). Foggers generally create the smallest droplets on average, and therefore may cause disinfectant chemicals to be suspended in the air for longer amounts of time. Mistlers generally create larger droplets than foggers but smaller than sprayers, which tend to create the largest droplets.

Question: Why is DPH advising against the use of fogging/misting/spraying of disinfectants in schools and office buildings to prevent COVID-19 infection?

Answer: DPH advises against disinfectant fogging/misting/spraying in schools and office buildings for several reasons. Disinfectant products are not benign and many are known to be respiratory and dermal (skin) sensitizers and asthmagens. The spraying or fogging of disinfectants in large quantities in school settings may lead to increased adverse respiratory and dermal issues for both the custodial or other staff performing the spraying as well as student and staff occupants of the building. In addition, fogging/misting/spraying does not replace the need for regular manual cleaning techniques, and could only be done in addition to manual cleaning and disinfection, which would potentially add a significant and unnecessary cost to school budgets. Although COVID-19 can be found on surfaces inside buildings, this virus is very easy to kill using the traditional cleaning and disinfection strategies already utilized routinely by custodial staff in schools and office buildings.



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Question: Aren't disinfectant products already used in schools and offices? Why is this application method different?

Answer: It is true that disinfectant products are already being used in schools and offices and that some of those products have the potential to be respiratory and dermal sensitizers. With regard to fogging/spraying/misting these disinfectant products though, it is the application and volume of disinfectants being proposed to be used in these situations that is an issue. Disinfectant products should continue to be utilized for spot cleaning frequently touched surfaces inside schools and office buildings. However, bathing every surface in a school or office building, including those that are infrequently contacted, in disinfectant products is not only unnecessary, but potentially harmful to both the staff person responsible for the application and the occupants of the building.

Question: What about the risk of airborne/aerosol transmission of COVID-19? Won't fogging help with that?

Answer: We are aware of the article written by a group of scientists suggesting the possibility of aerosol transmission of COVID-19. The question about the impact of aerosols on COVID-19 disease transmission is being raised by many epidemiologists around the country in response to the information being put forward by these scientists, especially because there is not much evidence in the epidemiology data, other than anecdotal accounts in specific circumstances and environments, that seems to implicate aerosols as a major contributor to the spread of COVID-19 infection. CDC is currently confirming that the main route of transmission for COVID-19 is via larger respiratory droplets transferred directly from one person to another, and that aerosols do not seem to play a significant role in the spread of COVID-19 in the US at this time. As such, there is no indication that fogging/misting/spraying of disinfectant products into the air in schools or office building will have an impact on reducing the spread of COVID-19.

Larry Hyatt