Valard

A QUANTA SERVICES COMPANY

WAASIGAN

TOBACCO OFFERING GUIDANCE DOCUMENT



JUNE 2026

PURPOSE

This document provides guidance for all Valard Construction LP employees and subcontractors working on the Waasigan Transmission Line project on how to respectfully participate in tobacco offerings. It describes the background and cultural significance of the practice, Valard's commitment to this protocol, how offerings will be integrated into weekly tailboard meetings, and practical guidance for participation.

This document supports the cultural awareness training completed by all project team members and is intended to help everyone — regardless of background — feel informed and confident acting on that learning in a meaningful way.



BACKGROUND: CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF TOBACCO OFFERINGS

As part of the Waasigan Transmission Line project, Valard Construction works alongside partner Nations whose traditional territories we operate within. These communities have shared their cultural protocols with our team, including the significance of tobacco as a sacred offering.

For Anishinaabe and many other First Nations peoples, tobacco (Asemaa) is one of the four sacred medicines. It holds deep spiritual and cultural significance:

- Tobacco is used as a means of communication between people and the spirit world — when you give tobacco and speak your words, those words are carried forward.
- Offering tobacco is a way of showing respect — to the land, to the Creator, to the community, and to one another.
- It is used to open ceremony, to express gratitude, to ask for guidance or safe passage, and to acknowledge the sacredness of the work being done on the land.
- By offering tobacco before beginning work, we are acknowledging that we are guests on this territory and that we carry a responsibility to conduct ourselves with care and respect.

REQUEST FROM PARTNER COMMUNITIES

Partner Nations have asked that tobacco offerings become part of the regular rhythm of project work — an expression of their commitment to seeing the project move forward in a good way, with genuine engagement with and respect for Indigenous culture on the land.

This is not a procedural checkbox. It is an invitation extended in good faith — an opportunity for each team member to participate in a practice that is deeply meaningful to the Nations on whose territory this project operates. Valard takes this invitation seriously and has made a commitment to honour it.

VALARD'S COMMITMENT

Valard Construction LP is committed to building respectful, meaningful, and sustained relationships with Indigenous communities on all projects. On the Waasigan Transmission Line, this commitment goes beyond compliance obligations — it reflects our recognition that we operate on Treaty lands and that the communities who steward these territories deserve genuine respect and partnership.

As an expression of that commitment, Valard has adopted the following practice for the Waasigan Transmission Line project:

WAASIGAN TOBACCO OFFERING COMMITMENT

Every Monday, the Valard Construction Liaison on shift will designate a crew to complete the tobacco offering on behalf of the project and all teams. The offering will be added to the designated crew's Plan of the Day (POD) for Mondays to ensure it is scheduled and visible to all crew members.

Tobacco will be made available at each Valard project office (Sapawe/Ignace Camp) for this purpose.

All team members are encouraged to engage thoughtfully with this practice as an extension of their cultural awareness training.

The offering is open to everyone — regardless of background, faith, or cultural identity.

MONDAY TAILBOARD MEETINGS: TOBACCO OFFERING PROCESS

The tobacco offering will take place at the start of every Monday tailboard meeting. The Valard Construction Liaison on shift will designate a crew to complete the offering on behalf of the project and all teams. Each Monday tobacco offering will be added to the designated crew's Plan of the Day (POD) to ensure it is scheduled and visible.

WHO LEADS THE OFFERING?

Each Monday, the Valard Construction Liaison will designate a crew or crew member to lead or present the tobacco offering. This may be:

- Any crew member who feels comfortable doing so
- An Indigenous employee or monitor who has offered to guide the practice for that week
- A Supervisor or Foreman representing the work front

Leading a tobacco offering does not require special knowledge or experience. What matters is sincerity and a willingness to participate respectfully.

TIMING AND FLOW

- The tobacco offering takes place at the opening of the Monday tailboard, before the safety review begins when the Valard Construction Liaison is on their regularly scheduled shift.
- It should take approximately 2–5 minutes.
- After the offering is made, the tailboard meeting proceeds as normal.
- The completion or non-completion of the tobacco offering will be recorded in the notes section of the tailboard documentation.
- The Valard Construction Liaison will designate a crew or crew member to complete the offering when on their shift, and will ensure tobacco is provided to the designated crew or crew member.

HOW TO GIVE A TOBACCO OFFERING

There is no single “correct” way to give a tobacco offering. What is most important is that it is done with respect, sincerity, and intention. The following steps offer a simple guide:

1. Take a small pinch of loose tobacco (provided) — you do not need a large amount.
2. Hold it in your left hand or between your fingers.
3. Take a moment to be still and present — you may close your eyes if you wish.
4. Speak your words, either aloud or silently in your mind. There is no script — you may offer gratitude, a request for safety, a thought for the land, or simply acknowledge where you are. (See examples in the next section.)
5. Place the tobacco on the ground, at the base of a tree, or in another natural resting place — not in garbage or waste containers.
6. Take a moment before moving on.

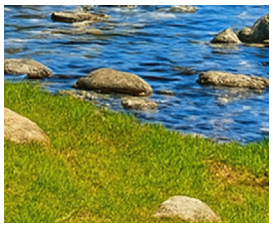
If you are not comfortable speaking aloud or are unsure what to say, simply holding the tobacco, being present, and placing it on the land is a meaningful act in itself. Intention matters more than words.

WHERE TO PLACE THE TOBACCO

Tobacco should be returned to the natural environment — this is how it is offered to the land and to the Creator. Appropriate places include:

- At the base of a tree or bush
- On open ground near the work area
- Near a body of water (without entering the water or contaminating it)
- On a rock or natural surface






IMPORTANT

Tobacco offerings should NOT be placed in:

- Waste bins or garbage containers
- Portable toilets or chemical waste
- Areas of active contamination or spill

The intent is for the tobacco to return to the earth naturally.



EXAMPLE PRAYERS AND WORDS OF OFFERING

These examples are offered as a starting point. You are welcome to use them, adapt them, or speak your own words. There is no requirement to follow a specific tradition or script — what matters is that your words are sincere.

SIMPLE WORDS OF GRATITUDE

"We are grateful to be on this land today. We ask for safety for our crew, and we offer this tobacco with respect to the territory we work on and the communities who call it home."

ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND

"We acknowledge that we are on Treaty territory and that we are guests here. We offer this tobacco to show our respect for the land, for the water, and for all living things that depend on this place. We ask that our work be carried out with care."

FOR SAFETY AND GOOD WORK

"Creator, we offer this tobacco as we begin our week. We ask for clear minds, steady hands, and safe passage for everyone on this site. We are thankful for the opportunity to do this work, and we carry our responsibilities with care."

A SIMPLE PERSONAL OFFERING

"Thank you for this day and this land. I place this tobacco with respect and ask for safety and good work this week."



You may also simply say nothing and offer the tobacco in silence with a moment of quiet intention. This is equally valid and equally meaningful.

CONNECTION TO CULTURAL AWARENESS TRAINING

All Waasigan Transmission Line project team members have completed or are completing Waasigan Cultural Awareness Training as part of Valard's commitments to partner communities. The tobacco offering practice is a direct extension of that training — an opportunity to move from learning to doing.

Cultural awareness is not only about understanding — it is about action. Partner communities have told us that what matters to them is that we show up with respect, consistently, over time. The Monday tobacco offering is one of the ways our team can honour that expectation and demonstrate that our commitment to respectful relationships is genuine and ongoing.

If you have questions about the cultural significance of tobacco offerings, or want to learn more about the protocols of the communities we work alongside, please speak with Valard's Indigenous Relations Advisor or reach out to the project's Indigenous monitors on site.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What if I practice a different religion or spiritual tradition?**

  The tobacco offering is not a conversion or a religious requirement. It is an act of respect for the Indigenous communities whose territory we work on. Many people from different faiths and backgrounds participate respectfully. If you have concerns, speak privately with the Indigenous Relations Advisor.

- **What if I say the wrong thing?**

  There is no wrong thing to say, as long as your words are respectful and sincere. The communities who have invited this practice understand that most of our crew is new to it. Effort and sincerity are what matters.

- **Where do I get the tobacco?**

  Tobacco will be provided and available at each Valard Project Team office (Sapawe/Ignace Camps) every Monday morning. If supplies are running low, contact your Valard Construction Liaison or the Indigenous Relations team.

- **Can I do a personal tobacco offering outside of the Monday tailboard?**

  Yes. You are welcome to make a personal offering any time you feel called to do so. This might be at the start of a particularly significant day of work, when entering a culturally sensitive area, or as a personal act of gratitude. The guidance in this document applies equally.

CONTACT AND QUESTIONS

For questions about this guidance document, cultural protocols, or Indigenous community relations on the Waasigan Transmission Line project, please contact:

Maggie Kavanaugh

Indigenous Relations Advisor — Valard Construction LP

Waasigan Transmission Line Project

mkavanaugh@valard.com or **IndigenousRelations@valard.com**

416-206-2918