



COVID-19 in Construction

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses commonly found in humans and many different species of animals. The way the virus that causes COVID-19 to spread is still unknown. Current knowledge is based on how similar coronaviruses cause illness and disease.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR EMPLOYERS TO USE

- Any employee who shows any signs of sickness should be sent home to avoid exposure to coworkers.
- Employers should post signage pertaining to the above bullet at the entrance to their jobsites. Signage should also indicate that any employee who has been out of the country or has had contact with a COVID-19 patient is to refrain from site entry for 14 days.
- Encourage proper coughing and sneezing etiquette by covering the mouth and nose with a tissue, or coughing or sneezing into the elbow on a shirt sleeve.
- Encourage proper hand hygiene, especially after coughing or sneezing.
- Employers should provide soap and water and alcohol based hand sanitizers with at least 60-95% alcohol. Or, provide hand washing stations that can be purchased through industrial suppliers. Other options include using a 55-gallon drum filled with potable water with a hose attachment. To prevent other health concerns, this hose must be kept in sanitary condition.
- Request that employees do not share tools with each other where possible.
- Provide an adequate supply of trash receptacles onsite and in break areas. Additionally, utilize effective housekeeping at break areas so contaminated trash isn't picked up by other employees.
- Advise employees to refrain from physical contact with others by keeping the recommended distance from others (approximately 6') and refrain from shaking hands (encourage social distancing).
- Encourage employees to eat lunch and take breaks apart from each other to provide more opportunities to practice social distancing. Rotating break times can also support this effort.
- Never use 100% bleach to clean or disinfect surfaces. Identify the SDS and use only in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.
- Review your PTO and sick leave policies with your Human Resource advisor.

OTHER SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS AND OSHA RECORDKEEPING

- Regularly clean tools using disinfectant wipes or wet rags with soapy water. When cleaning power tools, be sure to unplug the tool to prevent electrical shocks.
- Wearing protective suits, respirators, etc. may provide protection, but may also increase the potential for heat stress. Occupational heat related illnesses is an OSHA recordable injury.
- If someone is exposed at work, diagnosed, and quarantined, the incident is an OSHA recordable illness because they will be unable to work in the field while quarantined.
- At this time, the CDC is not recommending the use of respiratory protection for personnel that are not health care providers. If employers choose to wear an N95 filtering face piece respirator voluntarily, they must review and sign Appendix D of 1910.134.