

BUILDING TRADES UPDATED BULLETIN

March 20, 2020

COVID-19 Safety Measures on Construction Sites

The following communication is merely a guideline absent a state or federal mandate to close construction sites until the COVID19 outbreak has subsided.

We are sending out this memo to help clarify the current situation affecting Building Trades affiliates, their members, and the construction sites they work on. After speaking to many Business Managers and contractors, the Building Trades suggests the following guidelines when it comes to construction sites where members of Building Trades affiliated unions are working.

This scenario may change because of circumstances beyond our control, but, at this moment, as the coronavirus outbreak continues to spread, Building Trades leaders are working closely with local affiliated unions, project owners, contractors, and public agencies to keep construction sites open and safe. The safety of workers is always of paramount importance, particularly in situations like this.

Contractors and jobsite safety personnel should take specific steps to increase hygiene on the jobsite, such as:

1. Adding sanitary facilities (toilet and hand washing stations with soap and hand sanitizer provided). Workers should both wash their hands with soap for twenty seconds and use hand sanitizer often.
2. Performing deep cleaning on jobsites including disinfecting handrails, doorknobs, equipment handles and tools on an accelerated basis.

3. Instead of having group safety meetings, and to keep the suggested social distance, they should have smaller individual safety meetings at the jobsite maintaining social distancing guidelines.
4. Keep separation of at least 6 feet as feasible while on the job and always during rest and break periods and lunches; there should be no group gatherings.
5. Workers should consider bringing a lunch made at home and stay away from congested lunch trucks and coffee shops. Go directly from work to home and vice versa with as little contact with the general public as possible.
6. Workers should wear and utilize all safety equipment available on the jobsite. Contractors should provide all protective equipment as available.

It is up to us to make the conditions as conducive toward the safety of our members as possible. In addition to the above guidelines, here are the NABTU (North America's Building Trades Unions) and the CPWR (Center for Construction Research and Training) guidelines:

1. If you are sick, stay home and don't show up to work.
2. Don't shake hands when greeting others.
3. Try to stay three to six feet away from others.
4. Avoid sick people.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
6. Clean your hands often by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol; soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.

Construction workers often work with gloves outside and typically can work with some distance between each other. And they get paid only when working.

If these guidelines cannot be met and a project is in tight quarters, or in contact with the general public, consideration should be given to shutting the construction project down until safer conditions exist.

We will keep you up to date with the latest information as we get it.

Stay safe, protecting yourself, protects the family members you come home to.