



Construction Site Operating and Temporary Suspension Best Practice Procedures

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Introduction

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted businesses across the world. As the pandemic continues to spread, construction site operations will be impacted. States and individual counties are in the midst of determining whether or not construction should be considered an “essential” business and keep projects up and running. We are providing this guideline to address best practices for the health and wellness of your workers should your project be considered essential and is not shut down. We have also included a best practice guide should your project be considered non-essential and put into temporary or indefinite suspension of operations.

These measures of protection are based on current information for the Coronavirus (COVID-19) disease. It is recommended that organizations remain up to date on COVID-19 information and implement CDC best-practice recommendations as they are provided.

Construction Site Operation Best Practices

The health and wellness of every project site participant is the most critical consideration when a project continues moving forward as an essential business. The following best practices should be considered:

Reducing Transmission

Contractors or vendors should stay at home and follow CDC guidance.

Should personnel, visitors or vendors indicate any of the following, access to the site should be denied:

- Demonstrating flu-like symptoms
- Demonstrating acute respiratory illness symptoms or shortness of breath
- Has a high temperature (fever above 100.4 F)
- Demonstrating a persistent cough
- Has been in contact with or is residing with someone confirmed positive for COVID-19
- Has been in contact with or is residing with someone in self-isolation
- Persons at higher risk of severe illness
- Has traveled or been in contact with someone who has traveled outside of the US and has not completed a fourteen (14) day self-isolation
- Has had a medical professional prescribe self-isolation

Infection Prevention Measures Best-Practices for Construction Sites:

- Deny site access to all non-essential visitors
- Send personnel home immediately who show signs and symptoms of flu-like, shortness of breath or acute respiratory illness symptoms
- Encourage all site workers and visitors to practice good hygiene including wash hands with soap and water frequently for a minimum of 20 seconds each time
- As needed, arrange for additional hand washing stations/facilities on project sites
- Ensure an adequate supply of soap and fresh water is available to site workers and visitors at all times
- Provide hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol where hand washing facilities are unavailable
- Regularly clean, disinfect and sanitize all hand washing stations/facilities
- Ensure a sufficient number of trash receptacles for proper disposal of hand towels are available at all hand washing station/facility. Trash receptacles should be hands free with a secure lid
- Encourage all site personnel and visitors to self-police their trash. Persons should place all trash directly in trash receptacles. Do not leave trash for other to cleanup
- Develop procedures to limit the number of individuals using restroom facilities at any one time
- Properly wash hands before and after using restroom facilities
- Increase the cleaning frequencies for restroom facilities
- Ensure dedicated eating areas are defined and communicated on project sites
- All persons on project sites should sit 6-feet apart while eating
- Break times should be alternated to limit person-to-person contact at all times. Maintain social distancing during all break times
- Discontinue use of common refreshment centers/water coolers
- Provide hand washing guidance and symptom identification educational posters on project sites
- Establish routine environmental cleaning schedules for commonly touched vertical and horizontal surfaces such as doorknobs, handles, countertops, telephones, etc.
- Encourage personnel to travel to project sites using their own transportation and alone if possible
- Increase scheduled janitorial services on project sites for offices and restrooms
- Implement alternated project site start and finish times to reduce entry and exit location bottlenecking and promote limited person-to-person contact
- Supervise project site access points and promote social distancing guidance
- Eliminate or deactivate site or gate entry systems that require skin contact such as fingerprint scanners

- Require all site personnel and visitors to wash or clean their hands before entering or leaving the site
- Where feasible, develop site delivery procedures to allow delivery drivers to stay in their vehicles while loading and unloading
- Encourage delivery drivers exiting vehicles to wash or sanitize their hands before loading and unloading materials
- Where feasible, stairs should be used versus lifts, hoists or elevators. Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in stairs, lifts, hoists or elevators
- Attempt to increase ventilation in enclosed spaces
- Regularly clean the inside of vehicle cabs and between use by different operators
- Clean reusable personal protective equipment (PPE) using appropriate methods as prescribed by the manufacturer before each use. Avoid sharing PPE with any other employee
- Provide information and documented training to employees on COVID-19 that includes CDC guidance on:
 - Cough and sneeze etiquette
 - Avoiding close contact with sick persons
 - Avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
 - Avoid sharing personal items with co-workers
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects

Additional information on CDC guidelines can be found [here](#).

Managing Sick Employees

Separate sick employees. CDC recommends that employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and be sent home immediately.

Actively encourage sick employees to stay home. Employees should notify their supervisor, stay home, and continue to monitor their symptoms. Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not return to work until:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery - defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever - reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
- At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Discontinuation of Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 (Interim Guidance):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>

Communicate your company's Human Resources practices for managing sick time related to COVID-19.

Temporary Shutdown Guidance for Construction Sites

To ensure a safe and secure construction site shutdown process, the owner, contractor or site manager should ensure that:

- Confirm and document which party is responsible for site security, inspections and ongoing risk control/management of the project during the work stoppage
- Ensure all perimeter fencing is intact and secure
- Secure building entrances, openings, doors, and windows
- Ensure roof and other building openings are weather tight
- Ensure construction site emergency contact information is posted and readily available at the project site
- Place ample warning signage around the site perimeter
- Ensure project site lighting is sufficient and maintained
- Contract the local law enforcement and fire department to inform them of the project site shut down. Provide local authorities site emergency contact information and, if feasible, provide shutdown and startup dates.
- Develop a program to inspect job sites daily. Ensure to document inspections. Project site security surveillance cameras can be added or adjusted to complete daily inspections and to avoid daily trips to the project sites
- Where feasible, provide a security watch during the shutdown. Security patrols should include tours inside the building(s). Security watch procedures should be documented and communicated
- Eliminate scaffold access to prevent unauthorized use or site removal
- Secure all goods and materials to prevent damage from water, animals, wind, or other weather elements
- Where it is not required, temporary heat should be eliminated
- If equipped, make sure sprinkler system is functioning (OS&Y valve open, system is charged wet or dry) and fire department connection is unobstructed
- Fire extinguishers are charged and accessible
- Before project is shuttered, have a licensed electrician check all temporary wiring and repair any noted deficiencies
- Flammables must be stored in FM or UL approved containers or cabinets, or removed from the site
- Cranes and lifts should be removed, or lowered and secured
- Scaffolding should be inspected for proper bracing

- Ensure all free-standing concrete masonry unit walls are securely and properly braced to prevent collapse
- All heavy equipment should be secured and locked
- Remove and/or secure all hand tools and mobile equipment
- Fire standpipe valves should be locked, (by approved fire department methods) and the connection point capped to prevent tampering
- Ensure within the site plan that ALL shut off valve locations are clearly marked. Ensure to provide copies of site plans indicating shut-off valve locations to local law enforcement and fire departments
- Ensure that all gas supplies are properly shut off. Ensure to communicate with your local utility provider of the site shutdown
- Remove all flammable liquids from the site
- Remove and empty all trash receptacles from the project site
- If feasible, remove all temporary generators from the project site
- Notify insurance brokers and carriers of project site closures and provide the duration of closure and anticipated startup date(s):
 - Include documentation and photos of condition of project when the shutdown occurred
 - Preserve contractual documents leading up to work stoppage
 - Maintain a separate record of costs related to shutting the project down and maintenance of the project during the work stoppage
- Develop procedures in the event that third-party access to the site is required
- Ensure all systems remain in operating conditions as specified per NFPA 241 ([see attachment](#))

Helpful Resources

To help clients navigate these challenging times USI has implemented a **STEER** (Steer Through Epidemic & Economic Recovery) **Task Force**. This cross-functional team is working to provide up-to-the-minute COVID-19 information, understand cross-industry and geography impact and evolving responses, and to develop and deliver tailored solutions to help clients **steer** through this epidemic challenge and economic recovery.

For additional resources, tools, information, and links, please visit our Coronavirus (COVID-19) page:

www.usi.com/public-health-emergencies