

## Safe Work Practices in Vermont's Forest Economy During the COVID-19 Pandemic

### EMPLOYERS, MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS

1. Employees shall not report to, or be allowed to remain at, work or job site if sick or symptomatic (with fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath).
2. Non-symptomatic COVID-19 positive workers are not allowed on site and any worker(s) who have contact with a worker or any other person who is diagnosed with COVID-19 are required to quarantine for 14 days.
3. To the extent feasible, prior to the commencement of each work shift, pre-screening or survey shall be required to verify each employee has no symptoms of respiratory illness (fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath), including temperature checks. A temperature of 100.4°F/38°C or higher, is considered a fever, as according to the CDC
4. When you are ill, don't come into work; *you* must stay home.
5. To the maximum extent possible, cease in-person business operations and don't allow the public into your buildings.
  - a. Signs must be posted at all entrances clearly indicating that no one may enter if they have symptoms of respiratory illness.
  - b. Shift orders and transactions to online or phone communications.
  - c. Offer curbside loading, delivery, or other services that reduce the instances of in-person transactions.
6. All employers must provide training and details of standard operating procedures to their employees by May 4<sup>th</sup> 2020.
  - a. Training developed by VOSHA includes:
    - The signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and an explanation of how the disease is spread;
    - Information on appropriate social distancing and personal hygiene practices, including those set forth in [Addendum 11](#) and other applicable guidance; and
    - The types, proper use, limitations, location, handling, decontamination, removal, and disposal of any PPE being used.
    - Training materials can be accessed on the Department of Labor's website or downloaded and printed. Once training is completed, a certificate of completion will be made available to keep for the individual's records.
    - To document compliance, employers will be asked to keep record of all employee certificates.
    - Training materials can be found by visiting <https://labor.vermont.gov/VOSHA>
7. Have a daily check-in with workers, while maintaining a minimum of 6' between each other, to discuss your plans and expectations for worker safety.
  - a. Identify routine tasks where workers are typically in close proximity and how practices have been modified to maintain appropriate physical distances between them.
  - b. Inform them of what surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected, how often and by whom. Be sure they know where appropriate cleaning supplies are kept, such as EPA-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface, and the importance of closely following label instructions. (Additional information on cleaning and disinfecting surfaces is provide below.)
  - c. Ask workers for input on other areas that must be addressed in order to ensure social distancing and/or cleaning and disinfecting.
  - d. Based on the most current requirements from government agencies, inform workers of any Personal

Protective Equipment (PPE) that must be used in addition to standard PPE for their duties for COVID-19 related risks, where PPE is located at the workplace, and who to notify if supplies need restocking. Instruct them on how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE, and dispose of PPE.

- e. Publicly post required social distancing, personal hygiene, and workplace cleaning and disinfecting protocols and any other relevant information.
8. Maintain the smallest crew size necessary to safely perform a task; in no case should a crew include more than the maximum number of workers allowed by Executive Orders or subsequent requirements
  9. Prioritize essential tasks.
  10. To the maximum extent possible, avoid multiple workers operating the same machine, tools, or equipment.
    - a. This includes, but is not limited to, all logging equipment, log trucks, yard loaders and forklifts, mill equipment and workstations, scale house operation, paint guns, company vehicles, mechanics tools, office equipment or any other item, machine or location that multiple workers, suppliers or customers might utilize.
    - b. If having the same machine, tools, or equipment run by multiple people is unavoidable, clean and disinfect all surfaces that are commonly touched between users following the most current protocols posted by government agencies with jurisdiction.
  11. No more than 2 people shall occupy one vehicle when conducting work, and shall wear face coverings when riding together
    - a. Have the occupant clean their work vehicles at the start and end of the day/shift. Logging crews traveling to far away jobsites should take separate vehicles, or, minimize the number of workers per vehicle to the maximum extent possible and employ strategies to maximize the distance between workers in vehicles.
    - b. Discourage stopping at public facilities during work related transportation.
  12. No congregation of employees is allowed. All common areas, such as break rooms and cafeterias, excluding restrooms, are closed
    - a. **Exception to the closed lunch/breakroom requirement:** If the nature of an employer's work, or the work area does not allow employees to safely consume meals in the workspace an employer may designate a common area or room where meals may be safely consumed provided all conditions are met.
    - b. **Conditions:**
      - The employer shall limit occupancy of designated common area or room so that occupants maintain strict social distancing of no less than 6 feet per individual. The employer shall enforce the occupancy limit.
      - Hand washing facilities and/or hand sanitizer shall be immediately available at entrances of designated common area or room.
      - Employees shall be required to wipe down their area prior to leaving -or there shall be cleaning of the area at regular intervals throughout the day.
      - At the entrances of the designated common area or room the employer shall clearly post the policy limiting the occupancy of the space, and the minimum social distancing, hand washing/hand sanitizing and space cleaning requirements
  13. All common spaces and equipment, including bathrooms, frequently touched surfaces and doors, tools and equipment, and vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected at the beginning, middle and end of each shift *and*, when possible, prior to transfer from one person to another.
    - a. Assign staff to disinfect surfaces.

14. Enable office and support staff to work remotely by using online, or smartphone and tablet technology to communicate and complete transactions. Many are low cost and easy to install.
  - a. Install mobile applications to scan credit cards with smartphones or tablets, or manually enter credit card numbers over the phone.
  - b. Employ mobile applications for payroll timesheets, invoicing, document scanning, electronic signatures, communicating daily work plans, holding video meetings, sharing maps, forms, trip tickets and other customary business transactions to reduce the shared handling of objects.
  - c. Work with your bank to setup direct deposit for payroll and product payments.
15. Ensure that when workers deliver or pick up essential goods, they have the supplies to wash or sanitize their hands when they re-enter the work vehicle. Communicate with customers and suppliers to understand what each other's expectations are for when your employee arrives.
16. **Document, in writing or electronically, all preventative measures taken.**

## CLEAN AND DISINFECT SURFACES

1. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, car doors, steering wheels, etc.) with household cleaners and EPA- registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface, following label instructions.
2. Consult the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection products used. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
3. Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves should be discarded after each cleaning. If reusable gloves are used, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and should not be used for other purposes. [Clean hands](#) immediately after gloves are removed.
4. If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
5. For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
6. Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
  - a. Prepare a bleach solution by mixing: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

## PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING

1. Limit the number of times you physically interact with other people to the absolute minimum necessary to maintain essential business functions.
2. **Coronavirus travels through the air when a sick person breathes, talks, coughs or sneezes.** Without a vaccine or treatment, we can help contain the virus by staying at least **6-feet apart** from one another. Observing social distancing guidelines makes an enormous difference in reducing the spread of this highly contagious illness.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The information in these links, and that being posted on the COVID-19 resource pages of these Agencies, is being updated and amended on a frequent basis. Monitor them for changes that could affect your enterprise and responsibilities as a business owner or employer.

### Vermont Department of Health

- [COVID-10 resource page](#)

### Center for Disease Control

- [Resources for Businesses and Employers](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)

### United States Environmental Protection Agency

- [Disinfectants for use against COVID-19](#)
  - Note the contact time (in minutes) that these products must remain visibly wet on the treated surface to be considered effective against COVID-19

### Occupational Safety and Hazard Administration (OSHA)

- [Key OSHA standards for COVID-19](#)

### Vermont Department of Labor

- [COVID-19 resources](#) for employers and employees
- If employees have concerns they wish to bring to VOSHA's attention, they may do so in writing by accessing the [VOSHA website complaint page](#)
- [VOSHA resources](#), including a link to mandatory employee training materials

### Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development

- [Guidance for Vermont businesses](#)
- [Sector specific guidance](#) for questions about whether your business meets the definition of "critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security" as per Governor

Scott's [Executive Order](#)