



DATE: Monday, March 23, 2020

FROM: Tom Lemmon, Business Manager
San Diego Building & Construction Trades Council

TO: All Contractors and Construction Employers

RE: COVID-19 Safety Measures on Construction Sites

On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20¹ directing all residents immediately to heed current State public health directives to stay home, except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of essential critical infrastructure sectors and additional sectors as the State Public Health Officer may designate as critical to protect health and well-being of all Californians.

In accordance with this order, the State Public Health Officer has designated a list of “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers” to help state, local, tribal, and industry partners as they work to protect communities, while ensuring continuity of functions critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security.

Construction workers have been designated as “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers.”²

We thank our San Diego County Building & Construction Trades (SDCBTC) members and contractors that are going to work and building stronger communities with critical infrastructure like hospitals, schools, transportation, and utilities systems.

To all contractors and construction employers – it is imperative that you respect construction workers by taking action to protect their safety.

Per the updated bulletin of the State Building and Construction Trades Council of California on COVID-19 Safety Measures on Construction Sites³:

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.

¹ See Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-33-20: <https://covid19.ca.gov/img/Executive-Order-N-33-20.pdf>

² See Page 11 of California State Public Health Officer’s memo on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers dated March 20, 2020: <https://covid19.ca.gov/img/EssentialCriticalInfrastructureWorkers.pdf>

³ <https://cabuildingtrades.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/BTCCOVID19update3.20.pdf>

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 *and limit the number of persons in a single occupied space (such as elevators)*.
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.

Social distancing should be encouraged by having smaller construction crews and, if possible, staggering shifts.

If an employee is confirmed to have coronavirus or similar disease, the employer should notify all employees who were believed to be in contact with this individual and take actions consistent with appropriate protocols to prevent the further spread of the disease.

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.

The safety of our construction workers is paramount.

We are directing all SDCBTC members to be in solidarity of practicing COVID-19 Safety Measures on Construction Sites, including the following guidelines of NABTU (North America's Building Trades Unions) and the CPWR (Center for Construction Research and Training) guidelines:⁴

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.

We are also asking members to be in solidarity to prevent the theft or hoarding of construction job site bathroom, hygiene, and sanitation materials. Members are directed to report theft of any sanitizers, wipes, and/or cleaning products to their contractors. These items are in short supply for contractors and must be used to keep the construction sites safe and clean for all workers.

Finally, many of our affiliated unions and their signatory contractor associations have recently signed agreements ensuring that no adverse actions would be taken against construction workers that feel unsafe and do not wish to go to a job site, in particular stipulating that a member's request for a layoff and unemployment will be honored. We

⁴ https://www.cpwr.com/sites/default/files/CPWR_Guidance_on_COVID.pdf

encourage all contractors and construction employers to act in accordance with the principles of such agreements, even if they have not yet signed one.

The safety of our construction workforce and contractors is paramount – thank you for taking action to protect these hardworking members during most uncertain times.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Lemmon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tom Lemmon
Business Manager
San Diego County Building & Construction Trades Council