

ABC is encouraging individual employers to talk directly to workers about coronavirus safe work practices and protocols on construction jobsites by hosting COVID-19 Safety Stand-downs on Thursday, April 23.

Hosting a stand-down is a vital opportunity for employers and workers in construction to ensure their behavior keeps them safe and slows the spread of the virus, especially since many jurisdictions are allowing construction work to continue.

ABC is a member of the Construction Industry Safety Coalition, which developed the [Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Plan for Construction](#) and is encouraging member organizations to come together for COVID-19 Safety Stand-down events nationwide during the month of April.

Visit [ABC's Emergency Preparedness webpage](#) for toolbox talks and suggestions for hosting and promoting a COVID-19 Safety Stand-down, or you can use other resources that your company may have developed. In addition, everyone should emphasize that the stand-down can be held digitally simply by distributing the materials via text or email message. If they are held in person, social distancing guidance should be strictly followed (i.e., avoid gathering in groups of more than 10 people; participants must remain at least six feet apart).

Finally, we would like to encourage everyone to use the same hashtag, **#COVID19SafetyStandDown**, for sharing stories and photos on social media, as it will be beneficial for the entire construction industry to spread awareness of our stand-down efforts on social media.

Three steps to hold your own COVID-19 Job Site Safety Stand-down:

STEP 1: Prepare.

- Begin preparations as early as possible. Designate a coordinator to lead the stand-down, if you have multiple work sites, identify the team that will lead the stand-down at each site.
- Think about inviting your specialty contractors, owner, architects, engineers or others associated with your project to participate in the stand-down. We all need to work together to slow/stop the spread!
- Develop presentation materials or activities that will meet your needs. Decide what information will be best for your workplace and employees. The stand-down should provide information to employees about COVID-19, protective measures and the company's safety policies, goals and expectations. Hands-on exercises (a worksite walkaround, equipment checks, etc.) can increase retention.
- Decide when to hold the stand-down and how long it will last. Decide if the stand-down will take place over a break, a lunch period or some other time.
- Promote the stand-down. Try to make it interesting to employees. Stress the importance of understanding how to protect themselves and others from COVID-19.

STEP 2: Plan to cover the basics.

- Stress the importance of disease transmission safety during a global pandemic and encourage workers to following basic infection prevention measures.
- Try to make your stand-down a positive and interactive experience. Encourage employees to talk about their experiences and make suggestions.
- If conducting the stand down digitally, attach the packets or links to the packets, in emails or texts to workers.

- Include any guidance from local governments or health officials that may be relevant.

STEP 3: Hold your stand down.

- If the stand down will be in person, strictly enforce social distancing guidelines during the talk. Everyone should stand at least six feet apart and do not conduct the stand down with groups larger than 10.
- If you are taking attendance, do so verbally. Do not circulate a sign-in sheet or any item/material during the discussion.
- Follow up. If you learned something that could improve your program, guidelines, etc., consider making changes.
- Continuously ensure workers and subcontractors who are on the jobsite follow social distancing and other coronavirus infection prevention measures after the stand down.

ABC has developed a series of toolbox talks and other resources to assist with your stand-down event. Please visit www.abc.org/coronavirus and www.abc.org/safetyresources to access these resources. Contact [Steve Wiltshire](#) with any questions about the stand-down.

Helpful Information for a COVID-19 Job Site Safety Stand Down

What is COVID-19?

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19 is one of seven types of known human coronaviruses. COVID-19, like the MERS and SARS coronaviruses, likely evolved from a virus previously found in animals. The remaining known coronaviruses cause a significant percentage of colds in adults and children, and these are not a serious threat for otherwise healthy adults.

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 infection have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

How is COVID-19 Spread?

COVID-19, like other viruses, can spread between people. Infected people can spread COVID-19 through their respiratory secretions, especially when they cough or sneeze. According to the CDC, spread from person-to-person is most likely among close contacts (about six feet). Person-to-person spread is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, like how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread.

In assessing potential hazards, employers should consider whether their workers may encounter someone infected with COVID-19 in the course of their duties. Employers should also determine if workers could be exposed to environments (e.g., worksites) or materials (e.g., laboratory samples, waste) contaminated with the virus.

Depending on the work setting, employers may also rely on identification of sick individuals who have signs, symptoms and/or a history of travel to COVID-19-affected areas that indicate potential infection with the virus, in order to help identify exposure risks for workers and implement appropriate control measures.

There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity and other features associated with COVID-19, and investigations are ongoing.

COVID-19 Basic Infection Prevention Measures

The following infection prevention measures may help prevent transmission on construction job sites.

- Employees who have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough or shortness of breath) should notify their supervisor and stay home—DO NOT GO TO WORK.
- Sick employees should follow CDC-recommended steps. Employees should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.
- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and running water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 70% alcohol. Always wash hands that are visibly soiled.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Practice social distancing — try to maintain six feet between each worker.
- Reduce the size of any group at any one time to ten people or less or limit all in-person meetings.
- Minimize ridesharing. While in a vehicle, employees must ensure adequate ventilation.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs. Dirty surfaces can be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection. To disinfect, use products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the cause of COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface.
- Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use.
- Clean and disinfect frequently used tools and equipment on a regular basis. This includes other elements of the jobsite where possible.
- Employees should regularly do the same in their assigned work areas.
- Clean shared spaces such as trailers and break/lunchrooms at least once per day.
- Disinfect shared surfaces (door handles, machinery controls, etc.) on a regular basis.
- Avoid sharing tools with co-workers if it can be avoided. If not, disinfect before and after each use.
- Arrange for any portable job site toilets to be cleaned by the leasing company at least twice per week and disinfected on the inside.
- Any trash collected from the jobsite must be changed frequently by someone wearing gloves.
- Gloves should be worn at all times while on site. The type of glove worn should be appropriate to the task. If gloves are not typically required for the task, then any type of glove is acceptable, including latex gloves. Gloves should not be shared.
- Clean and disinfect frequently used tools, equipment, and frequently touched surfaces (door handles, handrails, machinery controls, cell phones, tablets) on a regular basis.
- If N95 respirator masks are not available, minimize dust and airborne contaminants by using engineering and work practice controls.
- Use proper personal protective equipment (PPE) when cleaning and disinfecting, such as gloves and eye protection