



Fact Sheet and Resources for Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Updated 4/24/20

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is responding to an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in China and has now spread around the world, including in the United States. The virus has been named “SARS-CoV-2” and the disease it causes has been named “Coronavirus Disease 2019” (abbreviated “COVID-19”).

On January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a “public health emergency of international concern” (PHEIC) (<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/30-01-2020-statement-on-the-second-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-%282005%29-emergency-committee-regarding-the-outbreak-of-novel-coronavirus-%282019-ncov%29>).

On January 31, 2020, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II declared a public health emergency (PHE) for the United States to aid the nation’s healthcare community in responding to COVID-19.

On March 11, 2020 the WHO characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic, elevating its response urgency and acknowledging its likely spread to all countries around the world (<https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020>).

On March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a national emergency to convey to the public the seriousness of this situation and to make available resources and other support that can be directed to protect communities across the country. This designation will make up to \$50B available to support state and local communities to combat this disease. The President also called on states and hospitals to open their emergency management centers; gave broad new authorities to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to waive laws and regulations that hinder hospitals and doctors from effectively doing their jobs; announced the approval of new tests for the virus and a process by which people can be triaged and tested quickly; and waived interest on government-back student loans until further notice.

On March 13, 2020, the CDC issued a revised *Interim Guidance: Get Your Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events Ready for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)* intended for organizers and staff responsible for planning mass gatherings or community events in the U.S.

such as concerts, festivals, conferences or sporting events. The Guidance recommended cancelling community-wide mass gatherings (for example, >250 people; the cutoff threshold is at the discretion of community leadership based on the current circumstances the community is facing and the nature of the event) or moving to smaller groupings; and cancelling gatherings of more than 10 people for organizations that serve higher-risk populations in locations where there is minimal-to-moderate level of community transmission. The Guidance was updated on March 29, 2020 and can be found at <https://wwema.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Mass-Gatherings-Documents-FINAL.pdf>.

On March 15, 2020, the CDC, in accordance with its guidance for large events and mass gatherings, recommended that for the next 8 weeks, organizers (whether groups or individuals) cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more throughout the United States (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index_2.html). Updated information can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index.html>.

On March 16, 2020, the White House and CDC issued guidance to slow the spread of the coronavirus. Titled *15 Days to Slow the Spread*, the guidance asks all people to work or engage in schooling from home whenever possible; avoid social gatherings in groups of 10 or more people; avoid eating or drinking at bars, restaurants, and food courts; avoid discretionary travel; avoid visiting nursing homes or retirement centers; and practice good hygiene (https://wwema.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/15-days03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315pm-1.pdf).

On April 2, 2020, the White House and CDC issued new guidance to slow the spread of coronavirus. Titled, *30 Days to Slow the Spread*, the guidance extends the original *15 Days to Slow the Spread* guidance for an additional 30 days, until April 30, 2020 (https://wwema.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf).

On April 8, 2020, the CDC issued *Interim Guidance for Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19* to ensure continuity of operations of essential functions. CDC advises that critical infrastructure workers may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure to COVID-19, provided they remain asymptomatic and additional precautions are implemented to protect them and the community. A potential exposure means having a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of time of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic. The *Guidance* lists steps that should be taken prior to and during shift work including temperature checks, regular monitoring, wearing a mask, social distancing, and disinfecting and cleaning work spaces (<https://wwema.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/critical-workers-implementing-safety-practices.pdf>).

On April 17, 2020, the Trump Administration announced a phased approach to reopening the country, noting that some states may begin to open even before May 1, 2020. Although general guidance, the President indicated that it will be left up to the individual state Governors to determine when and how to begin reopening their states. The three-phase approach focuses on symptoms, cases, and hospitalizations showing downward trajectories for a 14-day period, and depends on robust testing programs (including emerging antibody testing), and contact tracing. The approach is based on up-to-date data and readiness, and mitigates risk of resurgence, protects the most vulnerable, and can be implemented on a statewide or county-by-county basis by the Governors. A copy of the *Opening Up America Again Guidelines* can be found at <https://wwema.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/WHReopeningDoc41720.pdf>. More information can be found at the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/open-america/index.html>. More state-specific information can be found at the National Governors Association (NGA) website at <https://www.nga.org/coronavirus/>. Specific actions being taken by states can be found at the NGA website at <https://www.nga.org/coronavirus/#actions>.

On April 20, 2020, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) released a *Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies* aligning Federal Agency operations with the National Guidelines for *Opening Up America Again* (<https://wwema.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/FedWorkersOMBMemo042020.pdf>) in an effort to move the Federal workforce safely back from telework.

To contain or at least slow the spread of the outbreak, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has urged people to regularly employ everyday health precautions that are used to curtail other viral transmissions including the flu. These include frequent and thorough hand washing, avoiding large crowds and cruises, keeping a safe space from others, and staying home when sick. For more vulnerable populations, additional measures such as stocking up on supplies and medicine and staying home as much as possible to reduce exposure risk are urged.

In addition to the WHO and CDC, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has compiled information on its website about COVID-19 as it relates to drinking water and wastewater. At the site, they answer questions about tap water safety and state that Americans should continue to use (including for hand washing) and drink tap water without the need to boil the water first. Additionally, they note the WHO has not detected COVID-19 in drinking water supplies and that they have no evidence that the virus has been transmitted via sewage systems, regardless of whether the water is treated.

This Fact Sheet is intended to provide resources and information that can help WWEMA members and others in the water industry stay up-to-date on the rapidly evolving situation surrounding COVID-19. We provide here a list of primary resources to help you and your staff make appropriate workforce and public health decisions.

Web Links:

The **World Health Organization (WHO)**: <https://www.who.int/>

- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Outbreak - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/>
- Additional Information - https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

- 30 days to Slow the Spread - https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf
- Interim Guidance: Get Your Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events Ready for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/Mass-Gatherings-Documents_FINAL.pdf
- Keeping The Workplace, Schools, Home, and Commercial Establishments Safe - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/workplace-school-and-home-guidance.pdf>
- Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community-mitigation-strategy.pdf>
- Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers - https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html?deliveryName=USCDC_2067-DM25771
- Water Transmission and COVID-19 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>

The **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**: <https://www.epa.gov/>

- Coronavirus and Drinking Water and Wastewater - <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-drinking-water-and-wastewater>
- Disinfectants to Use Against COVID-19 - <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

WWEMA is closely monitoring the situation, participating in webinars, and gathering information from trusted agencies and resources and will continue to keep our members up-to-date on the rapidly evolving health situation. Questions or concerns should be directed to WWEMA Executive Director, Vanessa M. Leiby at vanessa@wwema.org; 703-444-1777 (O); 240-678-4623 (M).