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MBNLA Suggested Landscaping Protocols regarding COVID-19

[Please see government directives here; https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/soe.html](https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/soe.html)

There are many steps to consider during a time of limited staff, social distancing and overall safety. Below you will find some suggested steps for members used by members. Use what suits your business best. You will also find a number of useful links in the document which are provided to you as examples and suggestions.

#1 You are Required to:

- Understand the COVID-19 essential services verbiage that is on the Province of Manitoba's website. Links to relevant provincial documents are listed at the end of this document.
- Monitor information coming from provincial and federal governments, and your provincial public health/work safe authority, to ensure recommendations are being followed. MBNLA's website is also a wealth of information, see the links at the end of this document.
- Understand the government health orders specific to Manitoba. The Order of The Public Health Act (Section 67) Schedule released March 30th 2020 states the following:
 - 9. A business that provides support and maintenance services, including urgent repair, to maintain the safety, security, sanitation and essential operation of institutional, commercial, industrial and residential properties, and includes
 - (a) property management services, including residential snow clearing;
 - (b) services provided by skilled trades, such as plumbers, electricians and HVAC technicians;
(See link below, Landscape Horticulturist is a Registered Skilled Trade in Manitoba);
 - 27. A business engaged in construction work or services in the industrial, commercial, institutional and residential sectors, including demolition services and expanding, renovating, converting or repurposing existing spaces.
 - 29. A business engaged in construction work or services that supports environmental rehabilitation projects
 - 72. A business that provides arboriculture or lawn care services.
- Make sure you have the appropriate insurance for working during these trying times. Check in with your insurance company to double check you are fully covered. This is essential!
- Be aware of your own intuition, if you feel your team 'really' doesn't need to be in a specific area doing a specific task then don't take the risk. This is not the time to push work limits, always err on the side of caution.
- Be responsible to keep your employees educated and safe, be sure you have the cleaning supplies you need, be prepared because if you do not have enough safety supplies (example: hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes and individual hand tools) you cannot have your crews start their day.

#2 Communication is KEY!

- Companies can't communicate enough in a situation like this. Companies must let your employees, your clients, and the public know what your intentions are at all times! Communicate with clients and the public about the current status of allowable work in your province.

The Public

Have ample copies of signage and notices on your website, and social media. For example: today we will be in the Oakdale area, if you see us please notice we are always working 2 meters apart and please offer us the same social distancing courtesy to protect our staff.

- Have signage or a letter available that states that you are providing a government approved service.
- If possible, have signage on your trucks stating the protective measures you are taking daily to protect your employees and the public.

Your Clients

- Contact and get permission from clients to be serviced — preferably in a documented format such as email or other time/date stamped electronic communication.
- Send them a letter letting them know what you are doing and why.
- Contact with clients should be executed via email, phone calls, video conference, when possible, if personal contact is required, then maintain social distancing of 2 meters when on the client's property or the general public.
- Give your clients at least 24 hours notice through text, phone call or email.
- Contact all Property Managers if you are working on the grounds of residential or commercial multi-unit developments. They are the best source to get the word out to inform their tenants and have notices posted.
- Educate your employees in what to say to clients and the general public if they are approached on a job site.

*REMEMBER how you deal with your customers today, will resonate with them tomorrow. Be professional, be compassionate and understand their restraints and emotions.

#3 Keep your Employees educated and safe.

- Your entire team needs to know each of their responsibilities and emergency procedures. It includes understanding stay at home protocols if not feeling well, and all safety procedures such as hand washing, social distancing etc. Keep a rake length apart! https://www.linkedin.com/posts/pacific-landscape-management_2_socialdistancing-teamorange-nalp-activity-6651895673467871232-sarV/
- Make sure your employees know all government programs to assist them financially, this often is the highest fear during such uncertain times.
- Involve your team in feedback by having daily check-ins and debriefings through teleconference calls or zoom at the beginning and end of the day, check in on emotional mental health, we are all in this to support and assist! Transparency is key. Keeping your teams calm and focused will help them work better physically and emotionally.
- Provide a proper daily debriefing to communicate, inform, educate, and reinforce Health & Safety and COVID-19 updates daily. Permitting a shorter work shift will allow crews to be able to participate in these sessions.
- Crew personnel should have a common message to be able to respond to questions from the public in a professional manner. (While maintaining social distancing.)
- Have your staff complete a daily health check answering a self-monitoring symptoms checklist. Ask if they have a fever, cough or are suffering from extreme tiredness, how are they mentally feeling. The Government of Manitoba sites listed at the end of this document have great information including a simple screening process.
- If an employee has a family member at home with COVID-19, they are not to come to work, this is for everyone's health consideration.

- If a team member is at home due to COVID-19 and still on payroll, this is the time to have them work on some training.
- Stagger crew start times to minimize congregation at office/shop locations and keep crew size as small as possible.
- Enforce cleaning and sanitation protocols for all common spaces including trucks, equipment and onsite hoses. (Remember tools, handles, steering wheels, etc.). Provide hand sanitizers to all staff in their own bottles if possible.
- Encourage or supply your employees with hand washing kits with; liquid soap/bar with container, sanitizer and single use towels with a zip lock bag or securable garbage can for disposal.
 - The picture below is an example of acceptable preparations.



- Provide masks and disposable nitrile gloves for use when appropriate, for example If you must work in close proximity to another for a short period of time (i.e. lifting a tree ball into a hole), wear a face mask.
- As much as possible limit crews to ONE person per truck (2 people per crew cab or supercab) and have all other crew personnel drive directly to the job site or use public transit where available. Driving with windows open could potentially reduce risk by increase air turnover.
- Assign one truck to one crew and do not rotate. The person who is responsible for the truck is to sanitize it fully at the end of the day regardless if they were the only one in it. Over diligence is key.
- All vehicles must have cleaning wipes, sanitizer, extra gloves and garbage bags.
- Minimize use of shared equipment and tools, all tools are wiped down again at the end of shift. Keep tool sharing to a minimum, ideally each person has their own marked set of tools if enough are available.
- Personal Protective Equipment is not to be shared at any time including safety vests, goggles, etc.
- Wear gloves as much as possible, removing only to eat or drink. Work gloves should be washed after each shift at home as a precaution.

- Encourage employees to bring their own lunches and take their own garbage home. Drinking bottles are not to be shared at any time.

*REMEMBER all eyes and ears are on your employees, be mindful of dust, noise, social distancing and bylaws.

#4 Your Shop

- If your employees are returning to the shop to drop off larger equipment and trucks, always keep in mind that less is best. The less people at the shop the better, less touch points equals better control. Stagger return times for multiple crews (first out, first back).
- Check with your provincial regulations as to whether your office should be closed to the public.
- Do not allow deliveries inside the shop, arrange a time to greet at a distance
- If you have a repair person in the shop limit this to one person per day, all equipment and tools to be sanitized for use the next day
- Washrooms must be sanitized after every person that uses the facility. This can be done by the staff person using the washroom or by a designated cleaner. All touch areas have to be sanitized ie: toilet seat, handle, door handles, sink taps, etc,

#5 Be Prepared!

Be prepared to shutdown at any moment. TAKE THE TIME NOW to understand what it means to your company, your customers, your employees. Ask yourself, “What can we do if you have to shut down?” Look for ways to maintain all relations, set goals for being ready to start back up, understand financial government programs for your company and employees, be diligent in understanding your cash flow, solid budget etc.

Make sure that you are aware of all the federal and government subsidies available for business owners and employees and how to use them. Links are provided below.

Focus on what you CAN control and influence. BE creative, be forward thinking – this can be a time for growth.

Keep Well, Keep Safe, Keep Positive

THANK YOU!

Thank you to our members who have had input into this list and to the following organizations, whom we have borrowed information from:

- National Association of Landscape Professional
- Canadian Nursery Landscape Association – Landscape Canada Committee
- British Columbia Nursery Landscape Association
- Landscape Ontario
- Construction Safety Association of Manitoba

Government Links:

Canada financial supports:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

MB

http://www.manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/proactive/2020_2021/orders-soe-04132020.pdf

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/wd/apprenticeship/discover/mbtrades/index.html>

<https://manitoba.ca/covid19/index.html>

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/>

<https://www.constructionsafety.ca/>

BC – <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/essential-services-covid-19#non-health>

AB – <https://www.alberta.ca/essential-services.aspx>

SASK – <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/-/media/files/coronavirus/public-health-measures/critical-public-services-to-address-covid-19-and-allowable-business-services.pdf>

ON – <https://www.ontario.ca/page/list-essential-workplaces#section-1>

QU – <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/essential-services-commercial-activities-covid19/>

NS – <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

NB – <https://www2.gnb.ca>

PEI – <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/essential-and-non-essential-services-covid-19>

NL – <https://www.gov.nl.ca/aesl/feature/covid-19-information-about-aesl-programs-and-services/>

Provincial Association Links

BC - <https://bclna.com/covid-19-news-update/>

AB - <https://www.landscape-alberta.com/covid-19-industry-updates/>

SK - <https://www.snla.ca/industry/news.html?news=covid19-special-briefing>

MB - <https://mbnla.com>

ON - <https://horttrades.com/covid-19-resources>

NS – <https://landscapenovascotia.org/covid-19>

NB & PEI - <http://www.landscapenb-pe.ca>

NL - <http://www.landscapenl.ca/covid-19-resources.html>