

April 8, 2020

We're writing today to request that you please ask Governor Gretchen Whitmer to recognize the updated Federal CISA Guidelines that include Landscapers as a critical infrastructure workforce. This guideline is included in Executive Order (EO) No. 2020-21, the stay-at-home order, however, it references the CISA guidelines as of March 19th, prior to any updates that have occurred.

We know so many lawmakers have communicated their support of this change to the Governor, however, we understand with the current order expiring on April 13th, we continue to ask for help to have landscaping included in any extension of the EO.

Our Company is part of the landscape industry which includes lawn care, landscape maintenance, design/build, tree care, and irrigation and water management.

Landscape professionals maintain and protect the living environments around hospitals, government facilities, housing areas, parks, schools, and more, protecting public safety by:

- performing regular maintenance to mow, prune, control weeds, and inspect for safety and security issues;
- performing essential treatments to reduce the spread of dangerous and deadly diseases transmitted by pests like mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas;
- removing fallen trees and mitigating overhead hazards from wind effects;
- providing maintenance and plant removal to assist in fire abatement;
- managing invasive species; and
- keeping public and private pathways free from obstruction and potential risk.

Spring is a critical time of year for our industry due to the abundance of growth in the spring that requires prompt maintenance and care. Any halt or delay in landscape services during this time of year only magnifies potential safety problems and become much more difficult to maintain later in the year.

The nature of landscape work, which is performed outdoors, individually, or in small teams with little public contact poses a lower risk of spreading COVID-19. According to OSHA classifications, the landscape industry falls in the "lower risk" category of exposure (the lowest level on their occupational classification of risk for COVID-19).

We take employee and client safety and health very seriously, employing regular safety training and enforcing strong safety standards on the job, following Federal and State guidelines to mitigate hazardous exposures at landscape work sites.

We are all in this together, and the Landscape industry stands with our public officials to stop the rapid transmission of COVID-19 while also continuing to perform those essential functions that are necessary within our communities throughout Michigan.