



NEW YORK STATE NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION, INC.

COVID-19 RE-OPENING HORTICULTURE & LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS GUIDELINES & BMP's

GENERAL STEPS FOR SAFEGUARDING EMPLOYEES & CUSTOMERS

1. Review CDC and OSHA federal guidance and implement procedures to safeguard employees and customers. Links to those can be found here:
 - a. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>.
 - b. OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces:
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>
 - c. OSHA Manufacturing Guidance (for nurseries):
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA4002.pdf>
 - d. OSHA Retail Guidance (for Garden Centers):
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3996.pdf>
2. Review federal, state, and local capacity and distancing requirements, group meeting limitations, and any specific rules requiring your compliance.
 - a. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html>
 - b. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>
3. Inspect and inventory personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitizers, and other health/safety needs.

SANITIZING PROTOCOLS & WORKPLACE PREPARATION

1. Create SOPs for heightened and frequent bathroom and public space cleaning.
2. Only use approved EPA sanitizers: For a full list of EPA-approved sanitizers for COVID-19, click here: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
3. Bathrooms will need to be thoroughly cleaned more than once a day.
 - a. Consider providing wipes for customers to sanitize door handles and faucets after each use
 - b. Consider locking and providing keys for use to ensure proper cleaning between each use
 - c. Install additional touch-free soap and paper towel dispensers.
4. Consider high-traffic/shared areas. Make sure these areas are cleaned regularly and or are limited in use.
5. Clean high-touch areas like counter tops, door handles, light switches, and POS equipment frequently.
6. Create SOPs for staff handwashing and sanitizing and post throughout your facility.
7. Post handwashing instruction signs near all sinks.
8. Make hand sanitizer available in common and public spaces.

STAFF SAFETY, TRAINING, AND POLICIES

1. Devise and implement SOP's for staff safety, distancing, and PPE usage.
EMPLOYEES MUST:
 - a. Avoid touching their face, especially their eyes, nose, and mouth
 - b. Avoid shaking hands
 - c. Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
 - d. If soap and water are not available, use approved alcohol-based hand sanitizer
 - e. Wear PPE whenever possible especially when interacting with others
 - f. Sneeze or cough into a tissue and discard it into a closed container
 - g. Maintain a safe distance of at least 6 feet from other people
 - h. If they have any symptoms or feel ill, do not go to work
2. Host training sessions on all updated standard operating procedures (SOPs) and policies with your staff BEFORE reopening.
 - a. Openly communicate new floor plans, schedules and shift policies, sanitizing and documentation procedures, curbside/to go, delivery and gift card programs, and staff hygiene and uniform standards.
 - b. Provide PPE for all employees including masks, face shields, and gloves.
 - c. Train staff to correctly wear, maintain, and dispose of appropriate PPE, namely disposable gloves and a face covering over the nose and mouth.
 - d. Consider measuring and recording staff temperatures when they start work.
 - e. Employees who appear to have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) upon arrival at work or who become sick during their shift should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors and sent home.
 - f. Have a sign-in sheet to verify employees have been informed and trained on these procedures.
3. Employers must post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) notice for their employees. Find it here:
https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/posters/FFCRA_Poster_WH1422_Non-Federal.pdf
4. Minimize staff to essential personnel only which includes necessary employees to operate the nursery or complete job
5. Encourage employees and customers to stay away from your place of business if they:
 - a. Are sick or showing symptoms related to COVID-19 such as: Fever, Dry cough, or Shortness of breath
 - b. Have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19
 - c. Are in a high-risk category including: Over age 65 or have underlying health conditions
6. Communicate via email/video/phone frequently. Give your staff a way to communicate their concerns, ideas, and feedback regarding these policies and procedures.
7. Encourage open communication about mental and physical health.
8. Openly communicate sick leave policy and health of staff coming in for shifts.
9. Identify hard-to-cover positions and implement cross-training to prepare for possible sick leave, outages, and coverage issues.
10. Handwashing and Personal Sanitization Post handwashing signs near all sinks. The CDC has easy-to-print signs available, an example can found here at:
<https://www.servsafe.com/ServSafe/media/ServSafe/Documents/Handwashing.pdf>
11. Make sanitizer available to customers and staff. Install more dispensers as needed.
12. Staff should be encouraged to wash hands rather than sanitize whenever possible.

13. If workers need to cough or sneeze, do so into their elbow or a tissue. Dispose of the tissue in a closed container.
14. Ensure that you maintain an ample supply of sanitizing products. Getting behind on orders/supplies could mean downtime for your business.
15. Train staff on location and restocking for handwashing stations, sanitizer, etc.
16. Times to mandate handwashing, changing gloves, or sanitizing:
 - a. After handling cash or credit cards.
 - b. Between interactions with different parties.

CUSTOMER RELATIONS AND FACILITY OPERATIONS GUIDELINES

1. Update your customer capacity based on local, state, and federal guidance.
2. Create customer policies aligned with guidelines that you can cite and enforce.
3. Communicate your new policies/procedures with customers before they come in.
4. Adjust signage prior to reopening: We are open, front door sign with sanitizing policies and COVID-cautious approach, waitlist policy, and restroom signage.
5. Dialogue with your staff so they feel comfortable and are equipped to handle guests who are not adhering to your guidelines.
6. Create SOPs for staff for greeting and helping customers.
7. Create and encourage an online ordering system.
8. Offer curbside pickup or delivery services. Take online orders with scheduled appointments so that an employee can bring items to customer's car.
9. Limit the number of people coming into your place of business.
10. Review all public areas for spaces that will make it difficult to promote and monitor social distancing. Close or restrict areas and reduce access to items as necessary.
11. Allow customers to walk sales yards by appointment only.
12. Enforce social distancing with facility layout. Create one-way aisles to promote social distancing.
13. Tape out lines for registers with 6-foot minimum spacing between customers.
14. Clean and sanitize high-touch surfaces like counters and cash registers often using approved cleaning solutions.
15. Review and update SOPs for cashiers and create SOPs for handling transactions.
16. Review your planned events and regular activities. Cancel or reconfigure events that do not promote social distancing.
17. Create an SOP for head counts. Have door staff or manager take a head count hourly.
18. Make sure any new policies are listed on your website and promoted through social media, especially those relating to limited service, group size, or visiting hours. Include new capacity and group-size restrictions.
19. Create talking points and COVID-cautious FAQs for your operation for all staff answering phones. Practice questions and discuss when to involve a manager or owner.

LANDSCAPE CREW SAFETY

1. Limit crews to ONE person per truck and have all other crew personnel drive directly to the job site.
2. Assign one truck to one crew and do not rotate.
3. Provide Personal Protective Equipment for all workers and mandate they use it
4. Wipe down all tools after use with approved sanitizing products. Do not share tools.
5. Maintain minimum 6-foot distance between workers on job sites.
6. Keep approved sanitizing products in all trucks and clean frequently touched surfaces like steering wheels, tools, and door handles as often as possible.

7. Always wear face masks, even while driving. Keep windows open whenever possible.
8. If workers cough or sneeze, make sure they do so into their elbow or a tissue. Dispose of the tissue in a closed container.
9. If you have workers who do not have their own vehicles or a driver's license and are forced to have more than one crew member in a truck, put a plexiglass or plastic barrier in the cab of the truck to protect workers and keep them separated.
10. Keep crew sizes as small as possible.
11. Bring your own lunch, coffee, drinks, etc from home. Avoid going to stores for lunch, coffee, while out working at job sites.
12. Do not go into your customer's house. If you need them to turn on the sprinkler system, for example, make a video or give them instructions and ask them to do it themselves.
13. Be sure to follow DEC guidelines for all pest control applications.
14. While it is not a proven fact that blowers spread germs, it is advisable to minimize use of them at this time because of public perception and fear surrounding their use.

For more information, please go to:
www.nysnla.com