Interim Guidance for Pesticide Applicators and Pesticide Dealers/Distributors

April 6, 2020
Updated May 6, 2020

This guidance is provided for commercial pesticide applicators, spray contracting firms, private pesticide applicators, private pesticide applicators of general use pesticides (Agricultural Basic), general use pesticide dealers, restricted use pesticide dealers, pesticide distributors, and pesticide production establishments. This guidance may be updated.

Background:
In December 2019, a new respiratory disease called Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was detected in China. COVID-19 is caused by a virus (SARS-CoV-2) that is part of a large family of viruses called coronaviruses.

On March 24, 2020, Governor Mills signed Executive Order 19 FY 19/20 with a new directive mandating that all non-essential businesses and operations in Maine close their physical locations that are public facing, meaning those that allow customer, vendor or other in-person contact.

The Executive Order excludes businesses that provide essential services including, but not limited to: food processing, agriculture, industrial manufacturing, construction, trash collection, grocery and household goods (including convenience stores), home repair and hardware and auto repair, pharmacy and other medical facilities, biomedical, behavioral health and health care providers, child care, post offices and shipping outlets, insurance, banks, gas stations, laundromats, veterinary clinics and animal feed and supply stores, shipping stores, public transportation, and hotel and commercial lodging.

Note that the proclamation does not compel any business designated as essential to continue to operate. The Department recognizes that the practicalities of and risks posed by staying open as a business can be difficult during these unprecedented times. It is ultimately the business owner’s decision to continue to stay open, adjust schedules and routines, or to shut down.
On March 31, 2020, Governor Mills signed Executive Order 28 FY 19/20 that restricts the number of people allowed at essential businesses at any one time. The number of people who may enter essential business’ retail space is as follows:

- Less than 7,500 square feet limit the number of customers in the store at one time to 5.
- More than 7,500 and less than 25,000 square feet limit the number of customers in the store at one time to 15.
- More than 25,000 and less than 50,000 square feet limit the number of customers in the store at one time to 50.
- More than 50,000 and less than 75,000 square feet limit the number of customers in the store at one time to 75.
- More than 75,000 square feet limit the number of customers in the store at one time to 100 and install protective shields between customers and checkout clerks as soon as practicable.

The staged state reopening plan announced by the Governor on April 28, 2020 does not change how agricultural businesses operate other than to require that cloth face masks be worn where physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain. The Department’s guidance regarding implementing sanitation and physical distancing measures available on its COVID-19 website remain appropriate for farms, food producers and other ag businesses to utilize in their daily operations.

**Pesticide Application and Distributor/Dealer Operations:**

For pesticide application operations and pesticide dealers/distributors servicing those operations, the Department defines the following businesses/activities as consistent with Executive Order 19 FY 19/20:

- Commercial pesticide application for sanitizing and/or disinfecting.
- Pesticide dealers and distributors servicing pesticide application for sanitizing and/or disinfecting.
- Private and commercial pest management and pesticide application for commercial agricultural and horticultural* production.
- Pesticide dealers and distributors servicing private and commercial pest management and pesticide application for commercial agricultural and horticultural* production.
- Commercial pesticide application for vegetation management related to electricity transmission and delivery, transportation rights-of-way, air transportation facilities, public works maintenance, and fuel tank storage sites.
- Pesticide dealers and distributor servicing commercial pesticide application for vegetation management related to electricity transmission and delivery, transportation rights-of-way, air transportation facilities, public works maintenance, and fuel tank storage sites.
• Commercial pesticide application for wastewater treatment.
• Pesticide dealers and distributors servicing commercial pesticide application for wastewater treatment.
• Commercial pest management and pesticide application for structural pests.
• Pesticide dealers and distributors servicing commercial pest management and pesticide application for structural pests.
• Commercial pest management and pesticide application for arthropod vectors of disease, including but not limited to ticks and mosquitoes.
• Pesticide dealers and distributors servicing commercial pest management and pesticide application for arthropod vectors of disease—including but not limited to ticks and mosquitoes.
• Licensed pesticide production establishments.

* See Interim Guidance for Horticulture

If a business does not fall within this guidance, but you believe that it is essential or it is an entity providing essential services or functions, you may request designation as an essential business. Request designation as an essential business.

**For Employees**

**Cleaning/Disinfecting and Social Distancing:**

All facilities must practice social distancing and proper cleaning and sanitizing of those facilities. This includes:

• Regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This should be done:
  ✓ Before and after eating.
  ✓ After sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing.
  ✓ After touching face, hair, cellphone, and/or clothing.
  ✓ After using the restroom.
  ✓ Before handling food.
  ✓ After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated.
  ✓ After using shared equipment and supplies.
• Covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of elbow.
• Disposing of soiled tissues immediately after use.

It is encouraged that businesses post signage with handwashing procedures in prominent locations to promote hand hygiene. Clean and disinfect buildings and equipment as outlined in the CDC guidance.
If you need more information about the State of Maine response to Covid-19 please follow the links below.

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) [https://www.maine.gov/dacf/covid19/index.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/covid19/index.shtml)