

Landscape Canada COVID-19

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 different 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 your Provincial Government'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. Your Provincial landscape association website is also a wealth of information, see the links at the end of this document.
- Understand the rules of your province, landscaping is not listed as an essential service in any Province, yet verbiage refers to aspects of what landscapers do through maintenance for example:
Debris removal for safety, managing invasive species, inspection for safety, essential treatments to reduce spread of diseases, and or pests. Always follow your Provincial guidelines.
- 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 be. This is not the time to push work limits, always air 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!

The Public

Have ample copies of signage, and notices on your social media such as your website, FB and twitter. For example: today we will be in the Oakdale area, if you see us please notice we are always working 2 meters apart, we came in different vehicles, we will not be talking to clients etc.

- 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 BCLNA has provided an excellent example: <https://cutt.ly/Letter-to-Public>
- 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 a 24 hr heads up through text, phone call or email.
- Contact all Property Managers if you are working on Strata grounds, they are the best source to get the word out to their strata councils and can have notices posted.
- Educate your employees in what to say to clients and the general public if they are approached on a job site.
- Communicate with clients about the current status of allowable work in your province.

*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. Keeping your teams calm and focused will help them work better physically and emotionally.
- 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. Transparency is key. We are all in this to support and assist!
- Provide proper daily education and debriefing. A shorter work shift to allow crews to be able to participate in these sessions. Communicate, inform, educate, and reinforce Health & Safety and COVID-19 updates daily.
- 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 you mentally feeling. The FAQ's is very informative on this site: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-ncov-2019-staff-faq.pdf>
- 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.
- 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.)
- Enforce cleaning and sanitation protocols for all common spaces including trucks, equipment and onsite hoses. (Remember tools, handles, steering wheels, etc.)
- Provided masks and disposable nitrile gloves for use when appropriate.
- Disposable nitrile gloves for use in public areas and washrooms, make sure crew is trained in how to remove and dispose of them.
- Stagger crew start times to minimize congregation at office/shop locations and keep crew size as small as possible.
- Limit crews to ONE person per truck and have all other crew personnel drive directly to the job site or use public transit where available.
- 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. Provide hand sanitizers to all staff in their own bottles if possible.
- 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 able.
- Personal Protective Equipment is not to be shared at any time including safety vests, goggles, etc. Drinking bottles are not to be shared at any time.
- 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.
- 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 for disposal.
- 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.

*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.
- 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. Focus on what you CAN control and influence. BE creative, be forward thinking this is 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 - LCC
- British Columbia Nursery Landscape Association
- Landscape Ontario

Provincial Government Links:

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>

MB <https://globalnews.ca/news/6750116/coronavirus-monday-update-from-manitoba-health-officials-2/>

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.landscape-nb-pe.ca>

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