



Ohio Department of Natural Resources

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To Ohio's Forest Products Industry:

I am reaching out to you with this guidance in light of the Ohio Department of Health's Stay at Home Order issued today. I have attached it for your consideration and encourage you to read it. I hope it will help you answer questions that you may have. With the exception of persons engaged in essential work or activity, Dr. Amy Acton has ordered every resident of the State of Ohio to stay in their home from 11:59 pm on March 23 to 11:59 pm on April 6.

The order authorizes individuals to leave their residence to perform work deemed essential such as to offer, provide, operate, maintain and repair essential infrastructure and for work in agriculture. The order is intended to be broadly defined, and for purposes of Ohio's forest products industry this would include timber harvesting and manufacturing of wood products. Specifically, the order references the United States Department of Homeland Security guidance document on identifying critical infrastructure workers during the COVID-19 response. This document is also attached and specifically mentions "Workers who support the manufacture and distribution of forest products, including, but not limited to, timber, paper, and other wood products" as critical to the nation's response. Further, the division will allow any active or planned harvest on state forests to continue under the normal conditions of the contract.

Also, in accordance with the attached order, the forest products industry must comply with the social distancing requirements and the COVID-19 checklist specified in the order. I emphasize this to minimize exposure of industry employees and our staff to the COVID-19 virus.

As I communicated previously, the Division has taken steps, based on the recommendations of health experts and directives from Governor Mike DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health, to ensure that we are protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees and Ohio citizens. Many of our employees are working remotely during this time. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work through this temporary arrangement. It is the Division of Forestry's goal for these changes to minimally affect business operations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dal R Balsler".

Daniel Balsler, Chief
ODNR, Division of Forestry