



COVID-19 Energy Sector Response Efforts and Frequently Asked Questions

CURRENT STATUS OF DOE RESPONSE EFFORTS

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER) has been closely monitoring the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) since January 31. Within CESER, the Emergency Support Function #12 (ESF#12) Energy Response Organization (ERO) is part of the federal mitigation and response to COVID-19. CESER and the ERO are holding regular calls with state and industry partners, to discuss preparations, provide awareness, and assess issues that may require federal support, including long-term concerns due to supply chain disruptions. Coordination and associated tasks and Requests for Information (RFIs) from the federal, state, and energy sector will continue into the near future.

The ERO is activated at a Level III and ESF#12 Regional Coordinators have been virtually supporting activations in the National Response Coordination Center and FEMA Regions V and IX. In the other regions, the DOE Regional Coordinators are monitoring and staying in regular contact with states in their designated regions to identify needs. The ERO is identifying a list of essential ESF#12 functions and preparing staffing plans for these positions.

CESER advises energy sector partners to remain vigilant to cybersecurity threats. CESER also encourages energy sector companies to assess the full breadth of risk within the supply chain, including that of managed and industry service providers to evaluate how COVID-19 may affect service and their contractors approach to service delivery.

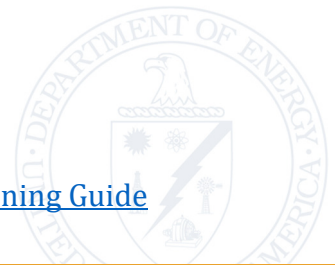
COVID-19 RESOURCES

General Web Links:

- CDC U.S. Pandemic Planning Efforts and Resources: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 webpage](#)
- Global Status on COVID-19 Disease Outbreak: [World Health Organization website](#)
- DHS CISA Insights Brochure: [Risk Management for Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- CISA COVID-19 Homepage: [DHS CISA National Risk Management of Coronavirus](#)
- Essential Workers List: <https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/CISA-Guidance-on-Essential-Critical-Infrastructure-Workers-1-20-508c.pdf>
- FEMA National Business EOC : <https://fema.connectsolutions.com/nbeoc/>

Energy Web Links:

- DOE Coronavirus Hub: <https://www.energy.gov/coronavirus-hub>
- Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council (ESCC) COVID-19 Resources: <https://www.electricitysubsector.org/>
- Edison Electric Institute: <https://www.eei.org/Pages/pandemic.aspx>
- American Petroleum Institute: [Oil and Natural Gas Industry Pandemic Planning Guide](#)





- American Public Power Association: <https://www.publicpower.org/resource/information-about-coronavirus>
- National Rural Electric Cooperatives: <https://www.cooperative.com/programs-services/communications/Pages/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-co-ops.aspx>
- American Gas Association: <https://www.aga.org/news/coronavirus-covid-19/>

State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Web Links:

- NGA State Coronavirus Actions: <https://www.nga.org/coronavirus/>
- NCSL State Legislator COVID-19 Resources: <https://www.ncsl.org/research/health/ncsl-coronavirus-covid-19-resources.aspx>
- NASEO Support for State Energy Offices: <https://naseo.org/news-article?NewsID=3477>
- NaCo County and State Emergency Declaration Map: <https://ce.naco.org/?dset=COVID-19&ind=Emergency%20Declaration%20Types>

WHAT GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE FOR ENERGY SECTOR PERSONNEL & SOCIAL DISTANCING?

Protective measures for access to homes and businesses in restricted areas should follow CDC and OSHA guidance:

- CDC Pandemic Influenza Resources: www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/index.htm
- Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>
- OSHA – Keeping Worker Safe: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

Non-essential work orders at customer homes or businesses that require workers to enter may be deferred or postponed when possible to preserve Personnel Protection Equipment (PPE) for essential emergency work and to protect the health and safety of personnel.

ARE ENERGY PERSONNEL AND SERVICES CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL?

CESER worked with industry and with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to put together a list of essential critical infrastructure workers. The guidance can be found below:

<https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/CISA-Guidance-on-Essential-Critical-Infrastructure-Workers-1-20-508c.pdf>





HOW CAN ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL ACCESS RESTRICTED AREAS?

In cases where access is restricted, the State Emergency Operating Centers (SEOCs) have defined protocols for allowing access for essential personnel. County Public Health Departments are also involved and will have representatives at the SEOC for coordinating purposes. DOE ESF#12 Regional Coordinators are supporting EOCs virtually and can assist if needed. Send an e-mail to energyresponsecenter@hq.doe.gov if you need to contact your DOE Regional Coordinator.

HOW CAN MY COMPANY ACQUIRE PPE FOR ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL?

Energy sector companies are monitoring the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) for essential workers. Currently the first priority is to ensure PPE is available to workers in the healthcare field and for first responders. CESER is working with the interagency to elevate the need for PPE in the energy sector.

WHAT DOES “SHELTER IN PLACE” MEAN AND HOW WILL THESE ORDERS AFFECT CRITICAL ENERGY SERVICES?

Some Governors and local government leaders have instituted “Stay at Home” or “Shelter in Place” orders to limit the spread of COVID-19. The orders vary, but generally include provisions to allow essential services to remain open and for essential workers to continue working. Links to these types of orders can be found on the National Governor’s Association website:

<https://www.nga.org/coronavirus/>.

WILL DOMESTIC TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AFFECT ACCESS BETWEEN STATE BORDERS?

Domestic travel advisories are not expected to affect critical services or travel for energy sector employees.

WHAT DOES THE PARTIAL CLOSURE OF THE CANADIAN U.S. BORDER MEAN?

The current restrictions do not apply to citizens of the United States and Canada. If such restrictions are widened, DOE will work with the FEMA National Response Coordination Center and DHS to identify energy sector employees for critical energy infrastructure located near the border to allow travel across the border to support critical work.





HOW CAN MY COMPANY ENSURE TIMELY AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORT OF GOODS AND SERVICES? IS THERE AN HOURS-OF-SERVICE WAIVER?

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Emergency Declaration

The U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) issued a Federal Motor Carrier Administration Declaration that provides regulatory relief for commercial motor vehicle operations that are providing direct assistance in support of emergency relief efforts related to COVID-19, including transportation to meet immediate needs for:

- Medical supplies and equipment related to the testing, diagnosis, and treatment of COVID-19.
- Supplies and equipment, including masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, soap, and disinfectants, necessary for healthcare worker, patient and community safety, sanitation, and prevention of COVID-19 spread in communities.
- Food for emergency restocking of stores.
- Equipment, supplies, and persons necessary for establishment and management of temporary housing and quarantine facilities related to COVID-19.
- Persons designated by Federal, State or local authorities for transport for medical, isolation, or quarantine purposes.
- Personnel to provide medical or other emergency services.

The declaration shall remain in effect until the termination of the emergency or until 11:59 P.M. (ET) on April 12, 2020, whichever occurs sooner.

CAN THE USE OF WINTER BLEND FUEL CONTINUE BEYOND THE MAY 1 SWITCH TO SUMMER BLEND?

Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) Waiver Requests

Industry groups are requesting RVP waivers asking to continue using the existing supply of winter blend fuels after the May 1, 2020, switch to the summer blend. Also being discussed is the possibility of getting a waiver to mix the existing winter blend with the summer blend.

Waivers

- For more information on waivers, visit the Energy Waiver Library:
<https://www.energy.gov/ceser/energy-waiver-library>





WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON PORT ACCESS?

The Coast Guard Assistant Commandant issued an update to their Prevention Policy, dated March 16, 2020 to Marine Safety Information Board (MSIB): Novel Coronavirus – Update, Change 3.

https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/DCO%20Documents/5p/MSIB/2020/MSIB-02-20_Change-3_Novel-Coronavirus.pdf?ver=2020-03-17-091856-473

To view the most recent MSIB regarding COVID-19, refer to the Coast Guard MSIB Publications:

https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/DCO%20Documents/5p/MSIB/2020/MSIB-02-20_Change-3_Novel-Coronavirus.pdf?ver=2020-03-17-091856-473

Vessel owners and operators should be aware of the following:

- The Coast Guard will continue to review all "Notice of Arrivals" in accordance with current policies and will communicate any concerns stemming from sick or deceased crew or passengers to their Coast Guard chain of command and the cognizant CDC quarantine station, who will coordinate with local health authorities.
- All commercial vessel operators and mariners are encouraged to exercise due diligence during daily operations and highly encouraged to follow the CDC Interim Guidance for Ships on Managing Suspected Coronavirus Diseases 2019.
- Vessel masters shall inform Coast Guard boarding teams of any ill crewmembers on their vessel prior to embarking the team.
- Local industry stakeholders, in partnership with their Coast Guard COTP, should review and be familiar with section 5310 Procedures for Vessel Quarantine and Isolation, and Section 5320 - Procedures for Security Segregation of Vessels in their Area Maritime Security Plan and the Marine Transportation System Recovery Plan.
- Maritime facility operators are reminded that they are not permitted to impede the embarkation/disembarkation of crewmembers as permitted under Seafarer's access regulations. This authority resides with CBP, Coast Guard, or the CDC for medical matters. Facility operators should contact their local CBP, Coast Guard, or CDC/health department offices if they have a specific request to restrict a crewmember's access.
- The Coast Guard recommends that people review the CDC travel guidance (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>) and the U.S. Department of State (DoS) Travel Advisories related to COVID-19 at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will be updated regularly with new information as it becomes available.