

Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA)

Contact local MSHA Federal District Office with COVID-19 Response questions.

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MSHA Response to COVID-19



The Mine Safety and Health Administration's (MSHA) mission is to protect the safety and health of the nation's miners. As long as miners continue to work at a mine, MSHA will continue to perform its statutorily-required essential functions within the parameters of the President's and Department's guidance, as well as that of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

MSHA has received a high volume of questions regarding the Coronavirus/COVID-19 and both mine operator actions and MSHA actions in response. This information sheet provides practices for operators and miners to minimize the spread of Coronavirus/COVID-19 and actions MSHA is taking to do the same.

What should mine operators and miners do?

- Avoid close contact: Put distance between yourself and other people (about 6 feet). This includes not crowding personnel carriers, hoists and elevators, or other means of transportation at the mine.
- Clean and disinfect: Wipe down equipment and other frequently touched surfaces.

- Wash hands: If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, etc.
- Stay at home if you are sick.

See additional guidance on the CDC's Prevention page <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/prevention.html>

What actions is MSHA taking?

- MSHA is abiding by the [President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America](#), which are based on the [CDC Interim Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Persons with Potential Coronavirus Disease 2019](#).
- MSHA will continue to perform its essential functions, including mandatory inspections, serious accident investigations, and investigations of hazard complaints (imminent danger or serious in nature).
- For the pendency of the President's national emergency declaration, MSHA has suspended Educational Field and Small Mine Services visits, as well as special safety and fatality initiatives that normally would gather groups of miners on-site to discuss powered haulage, electrocution, and contractor safety.
- To the extent feasible, inspectors are maintaining distance from miners while performing inspections.
- The Mine Safety and Health Administration will work with mine operators when it comes to the following recertifications:
 - Annual refresher training certification (30 CFR Part 46)
 - Surface and underground annual refresher training certification (30 CFR Part 48)
 - Certified person; sampling (30 CFR §§ 70/71/90.202)
 - Certified person; maintenance and calibration (30 CFR §§ 70/71/90.203)

Exemptions to recertifications will not be granted; however, their due dates will be extended by at least the time the government is operating under the President's emergency declaration.

Please note: This exception does not apply to new miner training. New miners must be trained before beginning work. Once the Emergency Declaration is lifted, mine operators should work with their respective district offices to ensure that all certifications are conducted in a timely manner.

- MSHA supports operators' efforts to minimize the spread of the Coronavirus/COVID-19, including

screenings or questionnaires, and will encourage our inspectors to participate on a voluntary basis.

- MSHA is following all protocols for identifying MSHA inspectors or other employees exhibiting symptoms or who have had potential exposure, asking them to quarantine at home, and cleaning the relevant offices following CDC guidelines.
- MSHA recognizes that some mining operations are not running at full capacity and have limited crews working. If a mine operator alerts MSHA to changes in production at a site, MSHA will, to the extent possible, limit the number of inspectors sent to that mine for a regular inspection proportional with the mine's continuing operations.

If you have questions regarding MSHA requirements, including reporting, certifications, or plan submissions, or updates on the status of your operations and staff on-site, please contact the appropriate MSHA District Office (<https://www.msha.gov/about/program-areas/metal-and-nonmetal-mine-safety-and-health>; <https://www.msha.gov/about/program-areas/coal-mine-safety-and-health>).

Many state and local governments have issued emergency orders imposing closure and shelter-in-place restrictions for citizens and businesses. MSHA does not have jurisdiction to enforce or implement these emergency orders. If you have concerns regarding state and local emergency orders or compliance with those emergency orders, please contact the appropriate state or local government office.

To access the Department of Labor's coronavirus resources page, [click here](#).