



Coronavirus (COVID-19) Prevention & Management Advice for the Aerial Application Industry

Overview of Coronavirus

As we work together as citizens of the globe to contain the Coronavirus (COVID-19), we find ourselves in new territory as we socially isolate and combat the virus. With that said, agriculture and food production—of which aerial applicators play a vital role—will continue to diligently work to provide a safe and an abundant supply of food for America’s citizens; however, there may be concern about how this may impact you, your family and your business in the aerial application industry. NAAA is here to serve and support you during this time. We can all take action steps to help reduce and mitigate Coronavirus.

Coronavirus Symptoms

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed Coronavirus cases. Symptoms that may appear 2-14 days after exposure are cough and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing OR at least two of the following symptoms: fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache sore throat or new loss of taste or smell. The virus is thought to be spread mainly person-to-person between people who are in close contact with one another. Respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby or possibly inhaled into the lungs.



Protect Yourself

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with hot water and soap. If you don’t have the ability to wash your hands, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Practice social distancing by standing or sitting at least 6 feet away from other people. Distance yourself farther from people who are sick or avoid them.
- Stay home if you are sick and ask employees to stay home if they are sick. This is critical even if you are only beginning to feel sick. If you wait until more serious symptoms occur, you may have already infected others. Quarantine yourself for 14 days if you have been in contact with the virus or if you have it yourself.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough. If you cough/sneeze into a tissue, throw it away immediately. Wash your hands!
- If you have a face mask and are sick, wear one when you’re around other people.
- Clean and disinfect your home and business, see the advice below.

Aerial Application Operation Action Steps

1. Access to your operation should be limited to essential employees and deliveries at this time.
2. Clean the inside of your aircraft and support vehicles before and after use.
3. Clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces frequently, including all office equipment, handles, light switches, toilets, faucets and sinks.
4. Provide cleaning supplies such as cleaning solutions, buckets, mops, brushes, etc. for cleaning at work and for those living in employer-provided housing. (CDC list of approved antimicrobial cleaning products: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>)
5. Clean and disinfect any employee areas, such as a breakroom or any areas where employees congregate.
6. Remove your clothes for washing and shower when you get home (you should be doing this anyway after working with pesticides).
7. Evaluate operational duties to determine if any, such as billing or supply ordering, can be handled remotely.

Additional Employer Action Steps from Cornell University's Agricultural Workforce Development

America's farm workforce is not immune to Coronavirus. Below are steps to protect yourself and your employees.

1. Talk with your employees about Coronavirus, how it spreads, and how to prevent getting infected.
2. Print the [CDC factsheets](#) and posters, post in your workplace and employee housing facilities.
3. Provide guidance and supplies to help employees clean and disinfect employer-provided housing. Follow up with employees and manage the process to be sure that this happens. Set up a regular weekly and daily schedule for cleaning. CDC guidance for cleaning homes: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>
4. Review your sick leave policy. The first advice for people who are sick is to stay home except to get medical care. Do you provide paid sick leave for your employees? If you do not, will employees feel financially obligated to come to work even if they are sick?
5. Communicate with employees that they should stay home if they are sick. Employees sometimes come to work believing they will face punishment or firing if they miss work. Be sure your employees understand that their health and that of their co-workers comes first. Communicate and make a plan to cover for sick employees. CDC provides posters in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) covering symptoms of novel coronavirus.
6. Prepare your disaster contingency plan. What will you do if 50% of your employees become sick and unable to work? Are there fellow ag pilots who might be able to assist in an emergency? Who will manage for a few weeks if you are unable to leave your house or are hospitalized?
7. Cornell provides the [Extension Disaster Education Network \(EDEN\)](#) to provide community education resources across the entire disaster cycle of preparedness, response, and recovery.
8. Penn State also provides farm [disaster preparedness resources](#).