COVID-19 news & updates

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The health and safety of ACEC Missouri’s employees and members is at the forefront of our policies and guidelines, and as such, we are continuously addressing the coronavirus outbreak. In accordance with government guidelines to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, we are working in the office on Mondays but are working remotely Tuesday-Friday. We will reassess as the situation develops. Please check the ACEC/MO and ACEC websites often as they are updated daily. If you have any questions, please email Bruce Wylie or Dawn Hill.

COVID-19 Information:

MO Dept. of Health & Senior Services

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Public Awareness Campaign

MO Association of Counties Operation & Workplace Guidance Resources

Federal Actions Relating to COVID-19

SBA Offers Low-Interest Federal Loans to Mitigate Coronavirus Impact

President Trump Approves Governor Parson’s Request for Major Disaster Declaration

President Donald Trump today approved Governor Mike Parson’s request for a federal major disaster declaration for the state of Missouri. The President approved Governor Parson’s request that the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Public Assistance Program be utilized to reimburse eligible expenditures made by local governments, nonprofit organizations, and the state for emergency protective measures by first responders and others responding to the coronavirus.
Governor Parson’s request for federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance and Crisis Counseling are still under review. Also, under review is the Governor’s request for federal hazard mitigation assistance to identify and reduce long-term risks associated with natural disasters.

“I appreciate the President acting quickly on my disaster declaration request and the commitment of federal resources as we battle this unprecedented public health and economic threat to Missourians,” Governor Parson said. “As I’ve said throughout our COVID-19 response effort, we will continue to pursue every way possible to adapt and deliver additional resources to help protect the health of Missourians and promote long-term recovery.”

To see the complete press release from Governor Parson’s office as well as past press releases, go to Governor Parson’s website.

ACEC Offers Three FREE-to-Members Online Classes on COVID-19 Responses

ACEC will host three free-to-members online classes on dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. To register for the online classes, click on the links below.

COVID-19 Potential Effects on Overhead Deadlines, Allowable Costs, and Steps to Take Now
March 31, 2020
3:30 – 4:30 PM Eastern
Presenter: Dan Purvine

Navigating Your Small Firm Through the COVID-19
April 2, 2020
1:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern
Presenters: Barbara Irwin and David Cohen

You’re Not Alone: Tools for Living and Working in Uncertain Times
April 7, 2020
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM
Presenter: Geordie Aitken

Recording Now Available: P&C Questions Answered

More unfolds every day as our government, our industry, and our global market continues to react to an unprecedented pandemic. EPIC assembled a team early and immediately began addressing clients’ risk and employee benefits concerns. EPIC subject matter experts Larry Reback, James Dunn, and Jacqueline Beaudet sat down to record a dynamic and conversational presentation to help answer your most immediate concerns. The recording is now live and available by clicking HERE. The presentation addresses the following:

- Property Coverage: Physical Damage to Insured Property, Business Income, Extra Expense, Civil Authority, Ingress/Egress;
- When and How to File Claims;
- The Response to Expect from Insurers;
- A Regulatory Update: State and Federal Response to the Pandemic; and
- EPIC’s Helpful Resources.

Catch up on all our coronavirus coverage at epicbrokers.com/coronavirus.
Cybersecurity is More Urgent Than Ever in Teleworking Environment

With companies and government agencies working remotely, often from home, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) issued a bulletin for federal agencies to be more vigilant in their cybersecurity. This is guidance any firm with employees working outside the office should follow.

According to the bulletin: “An organization should assume that external facilities, networks, and devices contain hostile threats that will attempt to gain access to the organization’s data and resources. Organizations should assume that malicious parties will gain control of telework client devices and attempt to recover sensitive data from them or leverage the devices to gain access to the enterprise network.”

NIST offers four recommendations to improve teleworking efficiency and security:

• Plan telework-related security policies and controls based on the assumption that external environments contain hostile threats.
• Develop a telework security policy that defines telework, remote access, and bring-your-own-device (BYOD) requirements.
• Ensure that remote access servers are secured effectively and configured to enforce telework security policies.
• Secure organization-controlled telework client devices against common threats, and maintain their security regularly.

Read more HERE. The full NIST bulletin can be found HERE.

by Dan Hilton, ACEC’s Director for Procurement Advocacy and International Affairs

More than 450 Members Share Concerns and Ideas in ACEC Coronavirus Online Roundtables

ACEC members shared a lot of questions in three online roundtables that ACEC hosted on Monday afternoon. More than 450 members participated in the roundtables, which were grouped by firm size: Small, medium, and large.

Most of the discussions dealt with how to handle employee and cash flow issues. For instance, members asked about the treatment of exempt vs. non-exempt employees, the possibility of making salaried employees hourly, and how long to maintain benefits for furloughed employees. Regarding cash flow, they talked about how best to cut expenses, whether to tap credit lines, and the possibility of asking clients for retainers to make payroll.

In these uncertain times, answers were not plentiful, but there were a few:

• Regarding what percentage of employees could take paid leave at the same time, a member recommended “about a third.”
• On continuing to work on job sites, a member reported that the construction manager at one site is taking the temperature of everyone coming onto the site and turning away those who have a fever.
• Firms are reaching out and doing work for their health-care clients to help them prepare their infrastructure for an expected patient surge.
• One firm recommends giving employees letters/proof from the company that they are an ‘essential service’ in case they are stopped while out working/on-site.
To see the notes from the virtual roundtables on March 23, 2020, click HERE. ACEC plans to host additional roundtables in the coming weeks. As soon as we know more information on those plans, we'll let you know so stay tuned.

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ACEC's New Coronavirus Impact Forum

The Coronavirus pandemic is truly an unprecedented event in our lifetime, which is impacting every individual and every industry. Each of us is handling the challenge of navigating through this crisis in our own way, but we are not alone. One of the greatest strengths we have as business leaders is the community we have in ACEC. We can help and learn from each other during this time of crisis by sharing our experiences and lessons learned. For that reason, ACEC has announced the creation of the “Coronavirus Impact Forum” on the ACEC Communities page. You are invited to join this members-only, self-moderated forum to discuss how you are responding to the coronavirus emergency. Again, the forum is open to all ACEC members. To access the forum, follow this link.

Log in or register with your company email address. If you are creating a new account, allow up to one hour for the online system to create your new account and access to the forum. If you need any support contact Member Services (memberservice@acec.org) or call 202-347-7474.

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Latest Collection of USACE Materials for COVID-19

Materials have been developed by medical and construction experts from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to help States and municipalities address potential shortages in medical facilities during the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic. They are intended to assist Federal and State agencies in assessing and developing potential sites for suitability as alternate care facilities, and to rapidly engage contractors to prepare them for medical use. States are encouraged to use these documents to support local requirements without USACE or HHS involvement where possible. To see the complete list of Alternate Care Sites (ACS) and the Implementation Materials, click HERE.

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Coronavirus Resource Document Revamped

ACEC revamped their Coronavirus Resource Document with more tailored news from their resource page and with links to organizations with useful information for our industry. The revamped document includes the following information:

- COVID-19 Related News Resources;
- Federal Action on Coronavirus;
- News for 3/26/20;
- Global Snapshot from the World Health Organization;
- U.S. COVID-19 Statistics;
- Regional COVID-19 Statistics;
- Conventions and Event Status for Groups and Associations.

To see the updated document, click HERE. ACEC also updates their website on a regular basis with this document as well as other COVID-19 information.
Second ACEC Member Survey Tracks Rapidly Rising COVID-19 Impacts

ACEC completed its second member firm survey tracking the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on March 25, with 738 firms participating. Here are the key findings (compared to the first survey):

- More firms (79%, up from 71%) are restricting domestic travel;
- More firms (93%, up from 80%) have implemented a telework policy;
- Social distancing (84%, up from 77%) and virtual work (84%, up from 73%) are the top work continuation methods;
- There were big jumps in the number of firms reporting delays in RFP/RFQ awards (40%, up from 24%) and reporting project delays or cancellations due to COVID-19 (58%, up from 44%).

Responding to new questions in the second survey, 87 percent of firms have not received any assistance from creditors or know of any; 47 percent believe Congress should delay payment of firms' share of Social Security payroll taxes; and 44 percent favor increasing interest deductibility for businesses. Other suggested steps that Congress could take to ease cash flow challenges include no-interest loans, grants to cover payroll, tax credits and deductions, and direct payments/unemployment to employees. Click HERE to read the complete survey report.