IN THIS ISSUE:

Governor Parson Mobilizes Missouri National Guard to Support COVID-19 Response

ACEC Advocacy Team Summarizes Key Items for Engineering Firms in $2 Trillion Economic Stimulus Bill

ACEC offers Four FREE-to-Members Online Classes on COVID-19

Covering Coronavirus: Risk Considerations

Updated Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce

ACEC Marco-Economic Update for the Week Ending March 28th

Coronavirus Resource Document Revamped

Notes from ACEC Virtual COVID-19 Roundtables

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

Governor Parson Mobilizes Missouri National Guard to Support COVID-19 Response

In a press briefing last Friday, Governor Mike Parson announced he signed an Executive Order mobilizing the Missouri National Guard to support the unified response to COVID-19. “The Guard will play a major role in supporting state and community operations, including potential support for COVID-19 testing and transporting equipment and supplies,” Governor Parson said. “I want to be clear – this is not about putting Missouri under martial law. This is a planning stage operation to provide more assistance to the people of Missouri and increase our capacity to deploy resources quickly.” The Missouri National Guard is preparing to conduct several potential missions including, but not limited to, the following:

- Assisting in the set up and operation of community-based testing sites
- Providing intrastate transportation of personnel and equipment for medical or testing support
- Providing logistical support to local and state responders as needed
- Continued assessment, facilitation, and construction of temporary medical or other facilities.

The Missouri National Guard has experience in rapid deployment of forces for emergencies. “We are committed to assisting local and state health officials support the health and well-being of our citizens and service members,” said Missouri National Guard Adjutant General, Brigadier General Levon Cumpton. “Rest assured that your Missouri National Guard will do whatever we can to help.”

The Missouri National Guard is fully integrated in the planning and execution of the COVID-19 response with both state and national partners. The Guard is working closely with Governor Parson, the Missouri Department of Public Safety, and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services to support a coordinated response.

To view Governor Parson's remarks from the press briefing, please click HERE. All pictures from the briefing are also available on Governor Parson’s Flickr page.

---

ACEC Advocacy Team Summarizes Key Items for Engineering Firms in $2 Trillion Economic Stimulus Bill

The House passed the CARES Act by Unanimous Consent and the bill was signed by President Donald Trump on 3/27/20. ACEC's advocacy team released the following summary of the bill:

Small Business Program Overview
The new law establishes a Paycheck Protection Program to assist qualifying small businesses, nonprofits, and individuals through the Small Business Administration’s 7(a) loan program. $349 billion is authorized for 7(a) lending from Feb. 15 through June 30, and SBA would fully guarantee the loans. Loans would be available during the covered period for:

- Any business, nonprofit, veterans group, or tribal business with 500 or fewer employees, or a number set by the SBA for the relevant industry. ACEC is seeking clarification on this point – whether SBA will implement the loan program using the traditional size standard for engineering, or something broader.
- Sole proprietors, independent contractors, and eligible self-employed workers would be eligible.
- Eligible recipients could receive loans up to $10 million or 250% of their average monthly payroll costs, instead of $5 million, with interest rates capped during the covered period at 4%. Loans can be used to cover eligible payroll costs -- salaries, commissions, regular paid leave, and health-care benefits -- as well as mortgage interest and utility payments. Firms would be required to make a “good faith certification” that funds will be used to retain workers, maintain payroll, and pay for rent and similar expenses. Funds cannot be used to compensate individual employees at an annual rate above $100,000, or to pay for emergency sick or family leave under the second coronavirus response package.

Loan Forgiveness – key elements
Recipients of SBA-guaranteed loans under the Paycheck Protection Program can apply for loan forgiveness over eight weeks for eligible payroll costs and for mortgage interest, rent, and utility payments -- SBA would pay lenders for any canceled debt plus accrued interest. Loan forgiveness would be reduced for businesses that fire employees or cut their pay. Canceled debt would be excluded from borrowers’ gross income for tax purposes. The measure also would authorize and provide $17 billion for the SBA to pay the principal, interest, and associated fees for loans under the 7(a), 504, and microloan programs for six months.
Disaster Loans
The package provides $10 billion to expand the SBA’s disaster loan program from January 31 through December 31 to cover businesses, cooperatives, employee stock ownership plans, and tribal businesses with 500 or fewer employees, as well as sole proprietors and independent contractors. The measure also authorizes SBA to advance up to $10,000 to existing and newly eligible disaster loan recipients within three days of receiving their applications. Recipients could use the advance funds to pay sick leave to employees affected by COVID-19, retain employees, address interrupted supply chains, make rent or mortgage payments, and repay debt. They wouldn’t have to repay the advance funds.

ACEC Offers Four FREE-to-Members Online Classes on COVID-19
ACEC will host four 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
Tuesday, March 31, 2020
2:30 – 3:30 PM CST
Presenter: Dan Purvine, A/E Clarity Consulting and Training, LLC

The Third Coronavirus Relief Package: Discussion of the Tax Relief Provisions
Wednesday, April 1st, 2:30-3:30 PM CST
Presenters: Marc Gerson, Loren Ponds, Jorge Castro, and Layla Asali of the Miller & Chevalier Law Firm

Navigating Your Small Firm Through the COVID-19
Thursday, April 2, 2020
12:30 – 1:30 PM CST
Presenters: Barbara Irwin, HR Advisors Group, LLC and David Cohen, Matheson Financial Advisors

Tools for Living and Working in Uncertain Times
Tuesday, April 7, 2020
10:30 AM – 11:30 AM CST
Presenter: Geordie Aitken, Aitken Leadership Group

Covering Coronavirus: Risk Considerations
Risk Management and Employee Benefits Considerations
The global COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic remains both dynamic and fluid. We continue to see unprecedented disruptions at home and abroad. In this issue, we are taking a focused look at:

1. Supply Chain and Business Risks
2. Cyber and Crime Coverage with Risk Management Tips
3. Essential Functions According to CISA
4. Wellness Tips for Workforces Now Working from Home
5. Telecommuting and Possible Workers’ Compensation Claims

READ NOW
EPIC Webinars – On Demand
Your dedicated resource any time, any place. Click on the links below to open two of last week’s pre-recorded webinars.

Visit epicbrokers.com/coronavirus to catch up on all our coverage.

Updated Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) recently released version 2.0 of their "Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce." The updated guidance provides more detail than the memo dated March 19, but because it continues to rely on a sectoral model to define critical infrastructure, it still leaves open the question of civil engineering firms. However, many client functions remain open and working, which should continue to require the support of A/E services. ACEC is working with our colleagues in the design community to seek clarification from the White House. Specifically requesting that 'architecture, engineering, surveying and mapping, prime contracting, subcontracting, specialty trade contracting, supplying, construction and program management and surety bond production join in urging further guidance to clarify “essential Infrastructure” and “essential businesses and services.”'

This guidance is advisory and continues to leave all decision-making in the hands of state and local authorities. The updated memo expands the emphasis of this nature on page one, while also emphasizing the reality that officials should add (or subtract) functions based on their own requirements and jurisdictions. Also, it should be noted that on a call with Mr. Krebs last Friday, the rumor of a national credential was raised. The federal government will not be issuing a national credential for individual use at this time.

To see the Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce, click HERE.

ACEC Macro-Economic Update for the Week Ending March 28th

Initial Unemployment Claims Break Records:
Breaking the longest streak of U.S. job growth ever recorded, at 113-months, March 2020 brought record unemployment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A record 3.28 million workers made initial claims for unemployment for the week ending March 21, 2020, according to the Department of Labor. This is up 3 million from the previous week and is 17 times higher than the previous record one-week jump, according to the Wall Street Journal. More than 10 states reported over 100,000 claims, including Pennsylvania, Ohio and California. The unemployment rate is expected to continue moving higher as business interruptions result in more layoffs.

We May Be in a Recession, says Fed Chair Powell:
In a rare live interview on NBC’s TODAY show on Thursday, March 26, 2020, Federal Reserve Chair
Jerome Powell said, “We may well be in a recession.” Powell did note the difference between the current crisis and a normal recession, given there is nothing fundamentally wrong with the economy and the banking systems. In recent weeks the Fed has taken a series of emergency actions to support the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic, including lowering interest rates to near-zero. “The virus is going to dictate the timetable,” Powell said on TODAY. “The sooner we get through this period and get the virus under control, the sooner the recovery can come.” Typically, a recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of economic decline.

**Forecasts Revise 2020 Estimates, Predict Deep Recession:**
Economic forecasters are revising 2020 outlooks and predicting zero growth this year. Oxford Economics’ expects U.S. GDP to shrink by 2.6% this year, and for global growth to be at zero in its World Economic Prospects March 2020 - 2nd Update. The most significant impact is expected to be in the second quarter of 2020, with contraction expected to be faster than during the global financial crisis, resulting in 2020 being the second-weakest year for the global economy in almost 50 years (with 2009 being the worst). There is considerable uncertainty but Oxford Economics said although deep, the recession is not expected to be long, “the bounce back in activity will be very strong once social distancing measures are relaxed, and monetary and fiscal stimulus combine with a resumption in discretionary spending.”

*by Erin McLaughlin, ACEC Vice President Private Market Resources.*

---

**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.

---

**Notes from ACEC Virtual COVID-19 Roundtables**
In the COVID-19 News & Updates last week, we included an article on the last survey ACEC sent to members. The one thing we did not include is the link to the notes from the virtual roundtable sessions. To see the notes from the March 23, 2020 roundtables, click [HERE](#). ACEC will be hosting additional roundtables in the coming weeks so stay tuned.