



This document has been created to help all landscape companies to acknowledge that the COVID-19 virus has to be dealt with in a serious manner. I realized while completing this list, that some or all businesses might be closed by the time this list is distributed by Landscape Ontario.

At this point in time, we do not know the magnitude of the affect that this virus will have on our businesses. We also do not know how far this virus will spread and how many people it will affect. The hope is that the virus goes away in a couple of weeks. I pray this is the case, but still feel reading these suggestions could help prepare your company for the future if the virus persists.

If reading this document only gets you thinking about and preparing for what might be, the practice of thinking ahead is never a waste of time. Planning and knowledge will be key to helping your businesses survive through this pandemic.

At the present time, we are still waiting to see if all landscape contractors are determined "essential services". When this is clear and if we are still dealing with this virus, documents like this and information shared by Landscape Ontario will be key in keeping your employees and families safe.

I am an eternal optimist. I know that whatever this virus throws at us we can handle as a community. Being in this industry for over 30 years, I also know that you need the right tools for the job. Consider this document a tool to get your company off the ground on creating policies to deal with the COVID-19 virus. If this tool never gets used, it will be the best-case scenario for all of us.

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Plan ahead, be compassionate, and above all...stay safe!

Author – Russ Springer

Legends Landscape Supply Inc.

### **Landscape/Maintenance Company – Suggested Policies**

- “Out of Country” – Mandatory Self Isolation for 14 days.
- Phone in policy on “Sick Day” – Full communication on symptoms and return date.
  - Suggest Telehealth Ontario for advice when off with any sickness
- Social Distancing (2 m – 6 feet)
- Hand Washing/Sanitizing Mandatory
- Post all Public Health information in Work Spaces, Route Books, and Send Electronically
- Send out letters to your clients updating them on your company’s response to COVID-19.
  - Flu and Pandemic Plan
  - Maintenance Contracts - discuss the “Clients” Pandemic Plan and adapt your plan to comply
  - Expectations Letter dealing with Payment/Accounts Receivable to your “Clients”
  - Rules for “Client” cancellation - Job Cancellations/Returning of Deposits/Signed Maintenance Contracts
- Create platform to communicate any updates on the virus immediately to staff.
  - Getting them to help you create the platform that makes them comfortable and invested
- Create your own “Best Practices” guidelines, and share with your employees and customers.
  - The employees should be encouraged to have input on these guidelines so they are comfortable with the policies that the company is following and sending out to the public
- Create “Best Practice” guidelines for dealing with vendors and suppliers.
  - Share your guidelines and ask them for their guidelines in return
- Explain your expectations of “outside of work” behavior to your employees as a group or individually.
  - All crew members in a truck need to be comfortable that other members are following similar “outside of work” behaviors.
- Help employees to find reliable sources for information on COVID-19.
  - Landscape Ontario – COVID Taskforce
  - CFIB – Small Business Help Centre
  - Government Website – Canada.ca – Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Check with your “Insurance Provider” that your workers are covered under your Policy.
  - Would you incur any additional liabilities for Injury?
  - What does “Workers Compensation” cover?
  - Is coverage different if your business is classified as an “Essential Service”

### **Landscape/Maintenance Company - General Practices**

- Suggest that if you have more than one crew, that different start times are implemented. (ie, 15 min intervals depending on the size of your company)
- Employees do not leave their personal vehicle until other crews leave the yard.
- Return to work for crews. (Share GPS apps to forepersons phones so they see who is at the yard)
  - Encourage off site organization of equipment, garbage and debris for fast unloading at shop
  - Suggest cleaning of trucks and sanitizing off site when waiting for other crews to finish
  - Complete all paperwork in truck – time sheets, route books, etc.
  - Start communicating tomorrow’s work day with your boss or manager
- Use Group Chats, Face Time, Conference Calls, etc. to have company meetings and/or use individual start times to have multiple meetings with staff.

- Limit all employees distance to 2 m (6 feet) - when dealing with the public.
  - No handshake policy with “Clients”
  - Condos email all complaints – no public contact
- Suggest that crews do not overlap into other trucks or meet on site to help other crews.
- Suggest a 2-person crew to promote social distancing. One-person crew could be adopted if workers are willing to drive to all sites. (Pay for fuel, and/or mileage on personal vehicles)
- When stopping at public washrooms, wash/sanitize your hands and use the truck wash station (Suggested before and after entering public washroom)
- Have foreperson to wipe down truck with sanitary products before and after a shift.
- Suggest single use drinking vessels be available (Supply Drinking Water Jugs w/Disposable Cups).
- Suggest that employees bring own lunches/coffee from home.
  - Reduce any need to stop at public locations
  - More safety with home prepared foods
  - Less garbage in trucks use sealed containers or sandwich bags
  - Do not share food/drinks for any reason
- Encourage your crew forepersons to memorize other crews’ personal cars to ensure all crew members have left the site at the end of the day.
- Have foreperson radio, text or call other crews that they have all left the yard for the day.
- Enforce personal hygiene rule for blowing noses (Use Kleenex, hand sanitizer and no spitting).
- Strict Garbage Policy
  - Nothing picked up by hand or gloves (use garbage pickers that can be sterilized)
  - Contact Companies that can have Garbage Bags left on site and not put into trucks where possible or have one crew deal with bags left on all sites daily
  - All personal garbage kept separate in vehicles and disposed by yourself at office

### **Equipment**

- If you have a regular maintenance day, look at making one person responsible for all repairs, sharpening of blades by creating a “new” full-time position.
  - Adapt this policy to the size of your company – 1 person/1 day a week
  - All equipment should be wiped down by foreperson for the safety of repair person
- All employees to have their own personal equipment. (ie, weed eaters, push movers, hand tools, wheel barrows, etc.)
- Always use your own PPE
- Mandatory hand washing on trucks or trailers. (Provide Jug of Water, Soap, Paper Towels, Hand Sanitizer).
- If renting equipment is necessary, wipe down all cab areas or handles with sanitary products.
- Label all tools on crews with names, initials, or colour coded per individual

### **Off Site Service of Vehicles – Repairs/Collision Repairs/Inspections**

- Any vehicle serviced off site should have a strict cleaning protocol when picked up.
  - Check dealers or mechanics “best practices” and be willing to change your provider if their policies do not match your “best practices” requirements

- Think about using towing companies to pick up and drop off trucks. This may provide extra time to clean trucks by the on-site mechanic or forepersons before crew arrives to work.
- Be aware that larger truck centers are considered “essential services” and there could be more risk associated with these service locations. (Truck drivers crossing US borders”)

### **Landscape/Maintenance Company Buildings**

- If you have an office:
  - Locked door policy to public
  - Design from home where possible
  - All consultations to take place out doors
  - Respect personal office space - 2 m personal space
  - Social Distancing in Common Areas - 2 m personal space
  - Do not allow deliveries drivers inside the building
  - Clean staff washrooms regularly and think of spraying down high touch areas by each member when leaving the washroom.
- If you have a shop:
  - Locked door policy to public
  - Locked door policy to control worker overlapping start or finish times. Workers may not know other crews are in the building
  - Do not allow deliveries drivers or repair persons inside the building
  - Wipe down all shared repair tools  
(Sanitary wipes/plastic gloves provided on work bench)
  - Clean, clean, clean on rain-days – forepersons suggested for “best results”
  - When bay doors open – create a sign that warns “do not enter” policy
  - Clean staff washrooms regularly and think of spraying down high touch areas by each member when leaving the washroom.

### **Landscape Company – Specific to Construction**

- Send only the foreperson to the site with equipment and materials, and have employees meet on job site with personal vehicles.
- Could create a “new job” for one person (Maybe DZ Driver) to pick up materials and deliver to all job sites.
- Consider new policy that has all materials be delivered to site by suppliers to limit contact for your employees in suppliers’ yards.
- Use one person to handle material when possible on site. (ie, rolling out geo-textile, personal bundle of bricks, etc.)
- Suggest that only one crew member operates equipment on site, possible lock out policy if equipment has key pad feature or remove keys.
- Ask suppliers what extra cost would be to pick up products left on site. Have crew organize return products for pick up (ie. Sort damaged product, shrink wrap, stack empty skids)
- Enforce Daily Cleanups of Sites – Garbage, Products, Etc.
- No Entry Into “Client’s” personal residences