As mentioned in my COVID-19 email update to you on March 13, we have been working on guidance and recommendations to ensure the continuity of our field operations with the safety and well-being of our employees as a priority. We all are committed to serving Texans and providing the highest level of service, which means continuing all our operations, including those that cannot be done remotely or virtually via telework.

Please see the important recommendations below effective immediately as we work together to meet our mission by continuing to serve the people of Texas while protecting the women and men of TxDOT. These safety recommendations are based on critical precautions advocated by health officials to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Please pay careful attention and share with others as these practices are implemented immediately.

We invite groups to share their questions and ideas with managers and supervisors, who will in turn pass these along to your Administration Chiefs. We will continue to update and improve these practices as we get feedback from the field.

**COVID-19 Recommendations for Continuity of Field Operations**

**For Maintenance Crew Operations:**

- If a “crew” is required for a task to conduct a “Tailgate” meeting and other necessary team discussions, follow the below guidelines:
  - Conduct meetings outside.
  - Provide enough space for discussions to ensure there is at least a 6-foot to 8-foot distance between every person.
  - Use a portable white board or provide hand-outs of traffic control plans, work areas, etc., to minimize extended face-to-face contact in close proximity as supervisors discuss assignments.
  - Maintain a 6-foot to 8-foot buffer distance from others during lunch breaks and avoid common surfaces.

- As feasible, assign a vehicle to each person to avoid multiple people using the same piece of equipment.
  - For example, one person can be assigned to drive a bucket truck and another can be assigned to drive a truck-mounted attenuator/shadow vehicle

- Clean surfaces of each vehicle or piece of equipment at the end of the day or when operators change. Areas to clean include door handles, steering wheels, shifter, seatbelt buckles, light switches, radios, mirrors and other typically “touched” surfaces.
  - As available, use gloves and wipe areas thoroughly using disinfectant spray or soap and water. If disinfectant spray is not available, scrub the area with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Note: it takes soap about 20 seconds to break down germs.
- Remove gloves when finished and immediately wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Assign a two-way/handheld radio to each crew member with its charger.
  - Rely on radio communication to reduce or eliminate close contact.
- Assign personnel to call-outs based on the vehicle assigned to them to prevent sharing of vehicles/phones/radios.
- When fueling vehicles:
  - Clean fuel nozzle/handles if no “gas mitts” are available.
  - Wash hands with soap or use hand sanitizer before re-entering the vehicle.

For Construction/Inspectors/Project Managers, Lab and Shop Personnel:
- Utilize recommendations for Maintenance Operations for similar types of tasks.
- Due to the nature of some of these functions, it may be easier to ensure people are kept away from each other for distancing purposes, though the following recommendations are still important:
  - Rely on electronic communication and cell phones for communication and if in-person interaction is necessary, ensure there is at least a 6-foot to 8-foot distance between each person.
  - For a lab environment, consider using nitrile gloves if available while operating the equipment/machinery to avoid direct contact with surfaces around controls, tools, and keyboards.
  - Maintain a 6-foot to 8-foot buffer distance from others during lunch breaks and avoid common surfaces.
  - For the shop environment, consider using nitrile gloves if available while operating diagnostic equipment, machinery, and tools that may be operated by multiple employees.
    - Clean and sanitize touch surfaces and wash hands with soap for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer after every use.

For Ferry Operations:
- Utilize recommendations for Maintenance Operations for similar types of tasks.
- Personal distancing from others may be difficult for deckhands due to the nature of the operation, making the recommendations below even more critical:
  - Whenever possible, attempt to create and maintain separation between people. Additional attention will be needed around walking patterns during boarding/offboarding as deckhands are near the public, often within a couple of feet of vehicles.
  - Additional emphasis is needed on washing hands with soap for at least 20 seconds or the use of hand sanitizer.
  - Restrict drivers from exiting their vehicles and walking freely on the ferry during the trip.
- Maintain a 6-foot to 8-foot buffer distance from others during lunch breaks and avoid common surfaces.
- Use sanitizing wipes, soap and water or disinfectant spray as available at shift change to clean surfaces such as gate/ramp controls, captain controls, ladders, hand rails, door knobs, etc. – in short, any touched surface.

**For Enhanced Cleaning:**
- The Support Services Division Director and District Engineers will activate housekeeping and janitorial protocols for maintaining a healthy environment. District leaders will notify janitorial contractors to heighten levels of cleaning to control infectious disease.

- For cleaning supplies, normal procurement processes are in place. PRO is continuing to look for sources of hand sanitizers, cleaning wipes and cleaning solutions; and during the week of March 9, we issued out the last of each of these available now.

- We have placed an order with a supplier we have found for these items to be delivered to the RDC in Seguin. These items should start arriving next week, however, the bulk may not be delivered until closer to the end of March or first of April.

- Districts may use their Purchase Cards to fulfill immediate needs, however, most local retail stores are out of these products. Grainger and Fastenal are out as well.

**Handwashing Protocols:**
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - *If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.*
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash or cough and sneeze into your upper shirt sleeve, completely covering your mouth and nose.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
WASH YOUR HANDS

1. Wet Hands with Water
2. Apply Soap to Cover All Parts of Hands and Under Fingernails
3. Rub Vigorously for 20 Seconds
4. Rinse Well
5. Dry with a Single-Use Towel
6. Turn Off Water Using Towel

USE HAND SANITIZER

1. Apply a Palmful of Product to Hand
2. Spread Evenly to All Parts of Hands and Under Fingernails
3. Let Dry - Caution: Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizers Are Flammable Until Dry

Texas Department of Transportation