



March 21, 2020

Dear Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo,

The Long Island Nursery & Landscape Association has been raising the standard of professionalism in the green industry since 1931. While originally a group of nursery growers, the association expanded over the years to include member companies specialize in landscape installation, landscape maintenance, tree care, irrigation, and water management. These professionals work daily servicing homes and businesses to enhance and maintain healthy green spaces and ultimately sustain our environment.

As New York State struggles to combat the rapid transmission of the coronavirus "COVID-19," we understand and acknowledge that in some instances, drastic steps have to be taken. We are communicating with you today to assure you that landscape services are essential services and must continue during these critical times. Landscapers are partners in assisting in the protection of public health and safety. Without the landscape industry conducting these valuable services, we will undoubtedly see increased instances where people may be harmed or become sick from other illnesses compounding our already stretched medical resources.

We encourage you to consider the services our industry provides as 'essential' for the following reasons;

**Landscape Maintenance professional are protectors of public health** performing essential treatments to lawns and green spaces to reduce the transmission of dangerous and deadly diseases through pests like mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas.

**Landscapers Contractors protect property and maintain green spaces that could otherwise jeopardize public safety.** Unkept fields and green spaces increase the chance of injuries and increase crime rates.

**Professional Arborists avoid damage property** as tree removal and tree health are critical to the security of homes and families.

**Landscape Construction Contractors play a critical role in stormwater management** through drainage systems within public and private properties.

**All sectors of the Landscaper Industry play a critical role in boosting morale and mental health** during this difficult time for our state. Without landscape services fields, parks, businesses, and homes will become overgrown and unkept, which can have dramatic psychological effects on the mental and wellbeing of our communities.

The Long Island Nursery and Landscape Association embraces your efforts to stop the rapid transmission of COVID-19 and we want to support those efforts while continuing to perform these 'essential' functions that are necessary within our communities throughout the state. In the spirit of creating a regional strategy, we urge you to consider the actions of NJ and PA concerning Landscaping services and Nursery growers in your definition of Essential Services.

Sincerely,  
John Ratto, CNLP,  
President, Long Island Nursery and Landscape Association