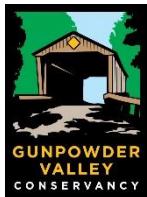


# Requirements to Perform Field Work (Tree Planting, Stream Cleanup, BMP Installation) During Maryland's COVID-19 Pandemic State of Emergency

## Maryland Strong "Roadmap to Recovery"



GVC Policy  
June 2020

These policy guidelines are presented to ensure adherence to the Gunpowder Valley Conservancy's Core Values and to allow our important field work to continue in a safe manner.

The measures described here were developed based on guidance provided by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment, and Maryland Department of Health regarding water quality monitoring, dated April 8, 2020. Some measures have been adapted from guidance provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). When called for, this policy will always comply with state and federal regulations and executive orders that are in force at the time of any event.

The GVC is committed to continuing to gather feedback, listening to suggestions, and adjusting where needed and where possible as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves. These are subject to change as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted by the Governor's office and as health and safety best practices are developed.

Above all, GVC's top priority is, and remains, the health and safety of each of our members, staff, volunteers, and clients.

### **General Guidance:**

*For all workers, regardless of specific exposure risks, it is always a good practice to:*

- Although stay-at-home order has been lifted, GVC encourages staff to wear masks and social distance 6 feet apart when leaving home for public activity, until further notice. GVC will comply with any changes to stay-at-home policies.
- Follow the guidance in the [governor's executive order on facial coverings](#) when you do have to leave your home.
- Wash your hands frequently. When washing your hands, scrub them with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and running water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol. Always wash hands that are visibly soiled.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practice good respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes with the inside of your elbow.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

- Stay home if sick.
- Recognize personal risk factors. According to CDC, certain people, including older adults and those with underlying health conditions such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19.

## **Requirements for GVC Staff and Volunteers:**

*The following is applicable to all GVC staff and volunteers who have agreed to perform field work such as tree planting and maintenance, stream cleanup and water quality monitoring, or BMP installation:*

The GVC Education and Restoration Program Director is responsible for conducting this program and updating it, in consultation with the Executive Committee, to reflect current guidance from the Maryland Governor's Office.

### **For Event Managers/Team Leaders:**

- Team leaders are authorized to stop operations at any time if PPE is not being utilized or if any of these policies are being violated. Workers who do not feel comfortable working in the field or have concerns about their risk will be free to leave at their request.
- Minimize the number of people needed to conduct field work. Although this may be inefficient, health and safety are our top priorities.
- Work must be conducted in small teams of 10 people or fewer. Field work that requires larger groups should be postponed. No work crews of 11 or more on the site. If the 11th person arrives, someone must leave.
- Work crews must be 18 years or older. No children unless a member of the property owner's household until Governor's restrictions are lifted. [Note: This requirement will be removed as soon as advisable.]
- To minimize interactions, the same teams should be used for each field visit - avoid interchanging approved staff to avoid new contacts and exposures.
- Even with groups of 10 or fewer, team leaders should be conscious of how many people can be in a work team at one time and still have maximum distance from one another, and six feet as a minimum distance.
- Each worker must always wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) while conducting field work, especially when social distancing requirements cannot be maintained. **Minimum PPE includes a face covering and work gloves.** Eye protection is encouraged. At a minimum, staff should wear cloth facial coverings, however if commercial face masks are available, those should be utilized. Workers will be asked to bring their own PPE to the work site but, if not available, GVC will provide them. When additional supplies of PPE are needed, let your team leader know well in advance of running out.
- Ensure that a washing station is set up at each event to include a table with soap, water for washing, and hand sanitizer. Soapy water should be dumped in the grass or into the

duff layer of a wooded area. It should not be dumped into a sanitary sewer unless a sink or toilet is nearby that drains to a sewage treatment plant.

- Each worker is required to answer the Initial Survey Questionnaire statements and GVC protocols, and sign the waiver indicating that they have understood and agree to follow the GVC protocols.
- Anyone who answers yes to any of the questions on the questionnaire will NOT be able to conduct field work and should leave the work site IMMEDIATELY.

For everyone in attendance:

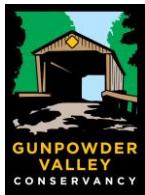
- Travel to the work site in separate vehicles is encouraged, unless all occupants are from the same household. Non-household members occupying the same vehicle should wear a face covering while in the vehicle.
- Avoid shaking hands or other greetings that involve touching.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth - especially after coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid sharing tools and equipment with other workers if it can be avoided. If shared, disinfect before and after each use.
- Avoid/minimize interactions with other members of the public not directly involved in the work activity.
- Perform regular and vigilant hand hygiene – wash your hands often. When washing your hands, scrub with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol. [GVC will need to provide hand washing and hand sanitizing supplies on site. GVC will set up a hand hygiene station on site. This will consist of a water source marked for hand washing only with hand soap and paper towels available for removing soil and dirt. Hand sanitizer will always be available.]
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces regularly with disinfecting cleaners (sprays or wipes). Examples include but are not limited to phones, keyboards, door handles, clipboards, writing instruments, scientific equipment, buckets, planting equipment, tabletops, countertops, bathroom fixtures and steering wheels of vehicles after every use. All equipment will be wiped with disinfectant at the end of the work activity including all tools, buckets, water coolers, etc.
- Staff and volunteers are encouraged to disinfect their vehicles after a work event before leaving the work site.
- Workers traveling to and from work events should avoid stops that are not necessary (e.g., to convenience stores for snacks).

Worker Acknowledgement

Team leaders shall ensure that all workers are aware of all work instructions and protocols, either by providing paper copies or by reading from a paper copy. **Each worker must sign an acknowledgement that they have received and understand the instructions, and agree to follow the instructions/protocols.** This can take the form of a hard copy of a form or a roster stating acknowledgement of verbal instructions.

### Disposal of PPE and Other Disposable Waste

Protection of all workers and the environment requires the proper and safe disposal of PPE. All used PPE waste items and disinfecting and cleaning materials must be bagged and tied and disposed according to Maryland and the [Baltimore County Bureau of Solid Waste Management](#) requirements. DO NOT dispose of any used PPE or disinfecting and cleaning materials, which are loose items, into open air waste/garbage or recycle type containers.



## Definitions:

**Event Manager:** Any staff or volunteer who is designated to lead an activity involving more than one work team.

**Team leader:** Any staff or volunteer who is designated to lead a work team.

**Worker:** Anyone, GVC staff or volunteer, who has agreed to and signed a Worker Acknowledgement to perform outdoor tasks related to watershed protection or restoration. For purposes of work on private property, any property owner present on the work site is considered to be on the work team.

**Work team:** Groups of 10 people or fewer present on a work site.

**Work gloves:** Each worker is encouraged to bring personal work or garden gloves from home. For those who do not bring gloves, GVC will provide gloves with rubberized palms for use on the day of the event. GVC-provided gloves will either be new or will be machine washed after previous use. Provision will be made to safely collect used gloves at the end of the event for laundering.

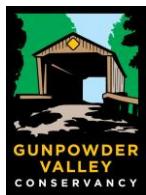
**Cleaning** refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

[Source: [CDC Interim Recommendations for U.S. Households with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-novel-coronavirus/infection-prevention-control/cleaning-disinfection.html). Accessed 5/9/20.]

**Disinfecting** refers to using chemicals, for example, EPA-registered disinfectants, to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

[Source: [CDC Interim Recommendations for U.S. Households with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-novel-coronavirus/infection-prevention-control/cleaning-disinfection.html). Accessed 5/9/20.]

Disinfectants are household cleaners and [EPA-registered disinfectants](https://www.epa.gov/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2) included on EPA List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2.



### Survey Questionnaire

[If not provided in print, script must be read aloud by the designated screener.]

**IMPORTANT: THE SCREENER SHOULD IMMEDIATELY STOP THE SURVEY AND DENY PARTICIPATION IN FIELD ACTIVITIES TO ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO ANSWERS YES TO ANY SURVEY QUESTION.**

For infection control purposes, I need to ask you a few questions:

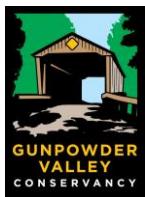
In the last seven days, have you had a fever or signs of a fever such as:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shivering, shaking, and chills</li><li>• Aching muscles and joints or other body aches</li><li>• Headache</li><li>• Intermittent sweats or excessive sweating</li><li>• Rapid heart rate and/or palpitations</li><li>• Skin flushing or hot skin</li><li>• Feeling faint, dizzy, or lightheaded</li></ul>	
In the last seven days, have you had a cough (either new, or different than your usual cough), sore throat, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing or loss of smell or taste?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Have you been in close contact with someone who has a fever or feels sick?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
In the past 14 days, have you been in close (less than 6 feet), prolonged contact (more than 2-3 minutes) with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Have you traveled outside the country within the last 14 days?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Individuals who answer YES to ANY question on the Initial Survey Questionnaire OR have a temperature of 100.4°F [38°C] OR refuse to participate in the survey process must be denied participation in any field activities.

Name of Individual Seeking Access \_\_\_\_\_ (please print)

Access Determination: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Denied

Name of staff completing form \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_



[NOTE: The following are FAQs provided by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment, and Maryland Department of Health regarding water quality monitoring, dated April 8, 2020. It may be modified to reflect GVC expectations as conditions change.]

### ***PPE and Guidance on Masks and Disinfection Procedures***

Question: What exactly is considered PPE?

Answer: PPE works as a barrier between an individual's skin, mouth, nose, or eyes and viral and bacterial infections. In order to be used in a work setting, most PPE—medical/laboratory gloves, some types of clothing/gowns, and N95 respirators—are regulated by U.S. government for different levels of safety, per each user.

When PPE is fitted and used properly with other infection control practices, such as handwashing, using alcohol-based hand sanitizers, and covering coughs and sneezes, it “minimizes the spread of infection from one person to another.”

PPE includes the following for all work events. Most common types are: Proper hand size fitting medical/laboratory gloves [work gloves? Yes], masks or face shields, respirators (N95 or FFP2 standard, or equivalent), proper sized eye protection, and hearing protection. This is not needed in my opinion.

Question: What procedures should be used for donning and doffing masks?

Answer (see page 2 from CDC guidance): [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/A\\_FS\\_HCP\\_COVID19\\_PPE.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/A_FS_HCP_COVID19_PPE.pdf)

“Put on NIOSH-approved N95 filtering facepiece respirator or higher (use a facemask if a respirator is not available). If the respirator has a nosepiece, it should be fitted to the nose with both hands, not bent or tented. Do not pinch the nosepiece with one hand. Respirator/facemask should be extended under chin. Both your mouth and nose should be protected. Do not wear respirator/facemask under your chin or store in clothing pocket.

Facemask: Mask ties should be secured on crown of head (top tie) and base of neck (bottom tie). If mask has loops, hook them appropriately around your ears.”

Remove and discard facemask if used instead of respirator).\* Do not touch the front of the respirator or facemask.

Facemask: Carefully untie (or unhook from the ears) and pull away from face without touching the front.”

Question: Is it safe to reuse disposable masks/N95s?

Answer: Yes, as long as you follow specific storage procedures. It is recommended to store your mask in a brown paper bag with your name on it. No two masks (fabric, surgical, or N95) should be stored together.

Question: How long can I reuse my disposable mask/N95?

Answer: As long as the integrity of the mask is not compromised, the mask can safely be worn for several hours and multiple shifts. A key consideration for safe extended use is that the respirator still fits and still functions. Experience in work settings where N95 masks are commonly worn indicates that respirators can function within their design specifications for up to 8 hours of continuous or intermittent use. The CDC offers recommended guidance on proper extended use and reuse of masks on their website.

Question: Is there guidance for proper surface disinfection procedures?

Answer: Yes, for CDC guidance see:

[cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html)

Question: Is there a list of recommended products for use in disinfecting surfaces from the COVID-19 virus?

Answer: Yes, see the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidance at:  
[epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2)