



CALIFORNIA
ASSOCIATION
of WINEGRAPE
GROWERS

NEWS ALERT

COVID-19 UPDATE – MARCH 17, 2020

Dear CAWG Members,

Recent decisions by state and county authorities to impose broad restrictions on businesses and the public make clear the extraordinary measures being undertaken to curb the spread of COVID-19.

We at the CAWG office will revise our staffing schedules to allow for work from home, while also ensuring the office telephone is answered, mail is collected and processed, and bills are paid. Most important, we remain dedicated to our mission to serve and protect the interests of California winegrape growers.

The broad scope of federal, state and local measures being implemented to protect public health is certain to affect your business. So, we intend to remain fully engaged in our public policy activities in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. Some CAWG staff members may work from home, but no one is taking a vacation during these extraordinary times.

As you may have heard, seven San Francisco Bay Area counties announced this week a shelter-in-place order for all residents, the strictest measure of its kind in the country. This order applies to Marin, San Francisco ([see order](#)), Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties, and it is intended to ensure that the “maximum number of people self-isolate in their places of residence to the maximum extent feasible.” These county level orders are subject to enforcement by county sheriffs and police. Violations shall constitute “an imminent threat to public safety.”

We expect other California counties will announce similar orders directing residents to stay home, restrict public and private gatherings, and restrict the operation of “nonessential” businesses and activities. Exempted from the orders issued to date are essential businesses and activities, and those basic operations necessary to maintain the value of a business’s inventory, ensure security and process payroll and benefits. The exemptions are not clearly defined in all cases, but clearly vineyard operations can continue because farming qualifies as an essential business.

County level orders to shelter-in-place are authorized as part of Gov. Newsom’s March 4, 2020 Proclamation of a State of Emergency. Consequently, every county has the authority to adopt similar orders.

CAWG members should also be aware that Newsom commented this past Monday evening on [Facebook Livestream](#) that the measures being implemented in the San Francisco Bay Area should apply statewide. At this point, the governor’s comments represent guidance and are not legally binding. However, circumstances may change, and additional restrictions may occur on a statewide basis.

CAWG is working with Rural County Representatives of California, California State Association of Counties, county agricultural commissioners and other groups to ensure agricultural operations can continue while at the same time protecting the health and welfare of the state’s farm workforce.

We thank you for your continued support for CAWG and we are proud to serve our state’s winegrape growers and California agriculture.

COVID-19 RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

- [Centers for Disease Control](#)
- [The President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America: 15 Days to Slow the Spread](#) (March 16)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Comprehensive and updated FAQs for employers on COVID-19](#) (Fisher Phillips / CAWG member, updated March 16)
- [Cal/OSHA interim guidelines for general industry on COVID-19](#)
- [Cal/OSHA guidance on requirements to protect workers from coronavirus](#)