



March 20, 2020  
Governor Tim Walz  
130 State Capitol  
75 Rev. Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Governor Walz:

The Minnesota Solar Energy Industries Association (MnSEIA) urges that, in the event of a “shelter-in-place” or “stay at home” order, electrical work, and thereby solar installers, be deemed part of the essential workforce. MnSEIA is a 501(c)6 nonprofit trade organization that represents our state’s solar businesses, with 110 member companies that employ over 4,000 Minnesotans. We write, in part, to support any similar request you may receive from other electrical or construction groups that would ensure they can work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Electricians and solar installers play a critical role in the modernization and upkeep of the electrical grid. Just as employees of electrical utilities maintain centralized generation and poles and wires, so too do solar installers create and maintain distributed energy resources. In Minnesota solar is electrical work, and we hope that the Governor’s Order would borrow from other municipalities, like San Francisco, and states, like New York, that have issued similar orders before us that deem construction and electrical workers to be part of the essential workforce.

Residential solar installation requires almost no face-to-face customer contact, and can thereby easily accommodate the required social distancing measures. The processes of non-residential solar installation require even less face-to-face contact, as the installation process is either on-top of an externally accessible roof or is in a field. The solar community has taken extensive measures to ensure that social distancing is maintained and public health ensured.

We recognize and respect the magnitude of the choices that your office must make to balance the public health and the economic well-being of this state, and respectfully request that electrical and construction work be deemed part of the essential workforce.

David Shaffer  
Executive Director  
MnSEIA