



\*Interim logo while new one is being developed

## Municipal Update: March 20, 2020

Effective Thursday, March 19, the CVBIA staff is working remotely.

**As CVBIA receives updates from municipal governments and state agencies relating to the construction industry, we'll share them with you here:**

The **Virginia Court Clerks Association (VCCA)** has released **information** concerning Circuit Court operations during this state of emergency. The organization is helping **resolve issues involving office closures and land record processing**. Contact Andrew Clark at HBAV, [aclark@hbav.com](mailto:aclark@hbav.com), if you hear of or have any issues/concerns/questions in specific localities.

The **Mortgage Action Alliance** is working with legislators **to enable notaries in states without remote online notarization (RON) laws** to be able to perform these transactions, which are critical to continuing operations during this crisis period. Click **[here](#)** to join industry members asking for support of S. 3533.

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### *Reported yesterday, March 19, 2020*

All **Suffolk offices are closed to the public** and the Planning and Community Development Department **requests that all site and building plans be submitted electronically**. Inspections are still being conducted, with limitations, and third-party inspections are being accepted. Click **[here](#)** for the details.

The **Virginia Building Code Officials Association** has compiled and is regularly updating a list of **operating procedures for local building departments** throughout the state, as well as information about approved third-party inspectors for each locality. Click **[here](#)** to access that information.

During a [call-in meeting with NAHB](#) March 19, CEO Jerry Howard urges all builders to take a **national "business impact" survey** by clicking [here](#). Data from the survey will help NAHB work with the federal government on ways to mitigate COVID-19's impact on the building industry. He also encourages all members to read NAHB's [letter to the President](#), which outlines the association's policy proposal.

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#### *Reported Thursday, March 18, 2020*

The [Norfolk Development Services Center](#) will **continue to conduct limited plan reviews** by digital submittals and via the online portal. Click [here](#) for the details. Also in Norfolk, the Division of Building Safety is **severely limiting onsite inspections through March 30 but is accepting inspections** through third-party, facetime, video and photos as outlined by clicking [here](#).

The [Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation](#) (DPOR) is **extending the validity of licences and other credentials** until 30 days after Virginia's state of emergency is lifted. Click [here](#) for more information.

The [Chief Justice of the Virginia Supreme Court](#) has issued a judicial emergency affecting court proceedings but has stated that the courts and clerks' offices will remain operational and provide essential services, **among which are recording, indexing and scanning local land records**.

If you run into any **challenges with these services not being provided**, please contact HBAV's Vice President of Government Affairs, Andrew Clark, at [AClark@HBAV.com](mailto:AClark@HBAV.com) as soon as possible.

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#### *Reported Wednesday, March 17:*

[Chesapeake has released a detailed Development & Permits plan of action](#), which addresses zoning enforcement, plan review, inspections, permitting and more. Click [here](#) for details.

The [Virginia Beach Planning Department is operating under modified conditions](#) until further notice. Click [here](#) for details on how various functions are being handled. All city offices are closed to the public and all in-office meetings are canceled.

[Norfolk has suspended all on-site inspections](#). If an inspection is requested, the inspector will contact the contractor to discuss various options available, including third-party inspections. Click [here](#) for details.

[Poquoson is still open for business](#) and accepting payment for permits via credit card or check. A city employee will meet visitors at the back door of the building if they prefer to deliver payment rather than mail it.

#### *Reported Monday, March 16:*

- **Franklin is limiting various types of inspections** and it does accept third-party inspections (click [here](#) for details).
- **James City County is continuing to perform inspections.** In cases where a third-party inspector is needed, that person must be pre-approved by the building official. (The county does not maintain a list of approved third-party inspectors.)
- According to some of our larger building supply members, they are continuing to operate and make deliveries. Dominion Energy reports that its field crews are still on the job but corporate employees are working remotely. Virginia Natural Gas also reports that it is operating in the field as usual.
- Several builders plan to keep their model homes open but schedule visits by appointment rather than walk-in. Many of our multifamily members are doing something similar with their apartment models.
- One builder has postponed warranty calls in response to vendor concerns about going into occupied homes.
- Our mortgage lender members are currently up and running but like everyone else may be impacted by changes to city and court operations.

Please let us know if there are other "best practices" we can share with members and if you have any additional questions and/or concerns. We will continue to share municipal updates with you as we receive them.

Best regards,  
**Ryan Rose, CVBIA President**

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## State and National News

**As more states enact broad "remain in place" policies**, NAHB is working to ensure that **construction is included in the essential business category** and is exempt from these requirements. Click [here](#) for more information.

**Although the Federal Reserve has cut interest rates to zero**, NAHB is cautioning builders to **be prepared for approval and other business delays, to check on their subs and workforce, and to watch their cash reserves**. NAHB has been invited by the White House to participate in discussions about keeping the housing sector running with as little disruption as possible, and will update members as new information becomes available.

NAHB staff is working remotely and the association has **suspended all staff travel** through April 15. HBAV staff is also working remotely.

**HBAV has compiled a comprehensive outline of statewide activities**, along with links to a wide range of information sources. Click [here](#) to check out the most recent update.

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