



WLCA Members:

The Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association (WLCA) is adjusting to the COVID-19 virus as with any other organization. We are trying to be as proactive and responsible as we can be. You should have received our announcement regarding the cancellation of Landscape University and also the Realtors Home and Garden Show.

The green industry has always been a business of close contact between team members, clients, and related trades. We used to demonstrate that with hearty handshakes, backslaps, and hugs. The kinship and camaraderie is still there, even if the gestures need to be sidelined for a while.

Your businesses are no different. The quicker things get weird and different, the quicker our lives will get back to normal. Instead of fighting against massive changes to social and business interactions, we need to embrace them. Your employees are scared. Your clients are scared. You, yourself may be scared. That is normal, lean into it, embrace, it, and acknowledge it. Confronting fear is important in times of great uncertainty.

As a business owner:

- Encourage any employee who is sick to stay home. This can be a 99-degree temperature or serious coughing and breathing issues.
- Take your cues from state, local, and national public health officials. This is not the time to "go with your gut."
- Encourage new ways to meet and greet one another at the shop and in the field. Discourage physical touching.
- Allow employees who can work from home to work from home.

- Meet with clients remotely, whether online or over the phone.
- Understand and be flexible with employees who must put their personal or family's health first.
- Refrain from making light of the situation. The time for jokes and glibness is over.
- Be open, honest, and transparent with any business challenges. Hiding the truth only exacerbates problems.
- Lean on history, relationships, and goodwill with your suppliers and clients. Those are always underrated business assets at times like this.

Enduring industries are tested in times like this. Let your company's values shine through. We will get through this crisis as we have gotten through so many challenges in the past. It is up to us, as landscape professionals, Americans, and human beings to do what is right so that society and our businesses can return to normal.

Common sense prevails in situations like the one we are currently experiencing. If in doubt, err on the side of caution.

We hope to see everyone again soon!