



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PLUMBING AND MECHANICAL OFFICIALS

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GP Russ Chaney, Chief Executive Officer

March 26, 2020

The Honorable Larry Hogan, Chair
The Honorable Andrew Cuomo, Vice Chair
National Governors Association
444 North Capitol St., Ste. 267
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Govs. Hogan and Cuomo,

The International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO) has been protecting the public's health and safety since 1926 by working in concert with government and industry to implement comprehensive plumbing and mechanical systems around the world. As a trade association, we believe it vital to offer our support and assistance during this time of national crisis with the novel coronavirus (or COVID-19).

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has listed plumbers and water/wastewater sectors as part of the nation's critical infrastructure. These sectors are considered so vital to the United States that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination thereof.

In order to maintain an educated and knowledgeable plumbing workforce as one of those 16 critical infrastructure sectors, we would encourage the NGA to use its advisory powers with the nation's governors to promote the following across the country:

1. In states that require a certain amount of plumbing continuing education be face-to-face, that those states be urged to waive those requirements in favor of all distance learning during this international pandemic. It is vital that everything possible be done to protect the health and safety of practitioners who must still enter homes and places of business for ongoing or emergency services.
2. Encourage states to suspend the filing of business returns and the payment of all business taxes for this industry to their state government for the duration of the pandemic. These suspended taxes should include taxes owed for the 2019 tax year, estimated payments for 2020, and all payroll tax obligations. The suspension should be broad and apply to all businesses. When the pandemic is over, the repayment of any deferred taxes should be spread out over time.
3. Ensure home water and energy service continuity by asking governors to require that utilities adopt or maintain current policies to prevent the shutoff of electricity, home heating and cooling, and drinking and wastewater services to residential customers during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

4. As a number of legislatures across the country are appropriating millions of dollars in addition to federal stimulus funds, governors be encouraged to fund drinking water and wastewater assistance to low-income households which are particularly vulnerable during this pandemic.
5. Encourage governors, in applicable states, to issue waivers to state licensing laws to allow out-of-state plumbers, already licensed and in good standing by their jurisdiction, the authority to practice for the purpose of filling emergency gaps during this crisis.
6. Encourage states, in their own guidance, to adopt the Federal CISA guidelines for essential businesses recognizing the importance of the plumbing industry and all other sub-sectors of the water/wastewater sectors. It is essential that manufacturing, supply chains and all the processes necessary to bringing products to market in this sector are designated as "essential businesses" to ensure that all components of our water and sanitation systems continue to operate effectively. Water and sanitation is foundational to our nation's response to COVID-19 and the plumbing industry is on the frontlines.

The plumbing industry is at the heart of America's response — ensuring that hundreds of millions of Americans have access to the water and sanitation critical to stopping the spread of this disease. We commend the incredible leadership the nation's governors are providing during this unprecedented time of crisis and assure you that IAPMO stands ready to assist in any way we can as the nation combats this crisis.

We thank you for your leadership during these very difficult times and welcome the opportunity to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russ Chaney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

GP Russ Chaney, CEO
The IAPMO Group

cc: The nation's governors