



WALP
WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONALS

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor of Washington
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

April 13, 2020

Dear Governor Inslee,

I'm writing to you on behalf of the many members of the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals. We ask that you consider landscape maintenance as an essential business during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently, the National Association of Landscape Professionals and the Department of Homeland Security report that landscape maintenance is an essential service. Washington is one of only a couple states in the nation that is not allowing landscape maintenance, and this is creating a lot of confusion for landscapers in Washington and neighboring states that are allowing landscaping. The net effect is you have some breaking the law and others abiding by it.

At a time when we are fighting a respiratory related illness, we feel it's important to maintain and reduce the spread of weed seed and pollen that will affect asthma and allergy sufferers and may exacerbate the symptoms of those who have the Coronavirus.

According to the MRSC website: Ch. 17.15 RCW requires designated Washington state agencies to use integrated pest management, and many local governments have adopted their own IPM policies. Proper IPM practices require the reduction of the use of pesticides and herbicides in favor of mechanical removal. Mechanical removal is the pulling or cutting of grasses, broadleaf weeds, shrubs and trees that can become a nuisance and destroy native plant and animal habitat, damage recreational areas, clog waterways and storm drains, lower land values and most importantly impact human health and safety.

As a result, municipalities and HOA's have rules and regulations regarding the maintenance of grasses, broadleaf weeds, shrubs and trees for the purpose of maintaining certain heights, lines of site for travel and safety in a neighborhood, and reduction of potential health hazards.

We propose that we can operate landscape maintenance crews and still practice the safe distancing by following these guidelines:

- Clean/disinfect trucks and equipment after each use.
- Stagger work hours and allow only one person per vehicle. Providing for gas allowance/reimbursement if more than one crewman is needed per job site.
- Wear face mask on crews of more than one and maintain 6' or more distance from colleagues, clients and passersby.
- Host outdoor meetings only when necessary.

The many members of the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals would like to thank you for your time and consideration. We're looking forward to getting back to work immediately.

Sincerely,

John Murphy
President