



March 23, 2020

The Honorable Chad Wolf
Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As the country continues to stop the spread of COVID-19, we are seeing state and local governments promulgating quarantine orders and mandatory business closures. The National Demolition Association (NDA) supports several public health measures that will help limit the spread of the virus. In addition, we appreciate and support the recent guidance issued by the Department of Homeland Security titled, *"MEMORANDUM ON IDENTIFICATION OF ESSENTIAL CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE WORKERS DURING COVID-19 RESPONSE"*¹. We feel that it is vitally important that the orders mentioned do not inadvertently harm the demolition, recycling and remediation industries and that they be designated as "essential". Therefore, I am writing today to request that you amend the guidance document to include construction and demolition work, in addition to the activities that support these industries.

The demolition industry is essential in supporting the infrastructure needed to successfully combat this pandemic. **The demolition and remediation industry is vital to the health and safety of all Americans, including decontamination of affected areas, remediation of environmental hazards or contaminated property to ensure vital services, including hospitals and emergency services which need to remain open.** Therefore, we recommend that DHS revise this guidance and clarify that "essential infrastructure" and "essential businesses and services" includes demolition contractors, along with businesses involved in material recycling, including hazardous material, and businesses conducting remediation work. In addition to the crucial support that these businesses give to the construction and demolition industry, these businesses work to protect the health and safety of workers and the general public.

Several counties have promulgated mandatory quarantines that include specific exceptions for "essential infrastructure" and "essential business" and this guidance is crucial towards encouraging local communities to allow individuals to leave their residence to provide any services or perform any work necessary to the operations and maintenance of "essential infrastructure," including, but not limited to, demolition, industrial recycling, remediation and other related tasks.

Lastly, NDA asks that you remain open to adding more items to specified "essential businesses and services" and "essential infrastructure" as conditions continue to change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Lambert".

Jeff Lambert
CEO
National Demolition Association

¹ <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>