



# CT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

## *Bureau of Outdoor Recreation*

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### **COVID-19 Response Procedures (June 29, 2020)**

**Introduction:** It is the policy of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to provide a safe and clean environment for all staff and visitors in response to COVID-19. These procedures were developed using information provided by the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and other State Park and Recreation systems. They provide guidance and manage expectations for outdoor recreation operations and facilities, including all of our state parks, state forests and state boat launches.

This guidance specifies the types of personal protective equipment (PPE) that must be utilized in specified circumstances; these PPE requirements comply with the federal and state public health guidelines noted above. In some circumstances, DEEP may provide employees with additional or more protective PPE that may be used as an added precaution, where supplies are available and priority needs can be met.

**Purpose:** This program has been established for the health and well-being of Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) staff and park visitors. Ensuring all BOR staff understand and comply with operational guidelines related to COVID-19, will reduce risk by ensuring the facilities associated with park operations are clean and that staff follow required social distancing, personal hygiene and infection control requirements.

**Background:** Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. There are many types of human coronaviruses, including some that commonly cause mild upper respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans. Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading very easily and sustainably between people. COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person in respiratory droplets that are produced from someone who is infected when they cough, sneeze, or talk. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (less than 6 feet). Maintaining good social distance (greater than 6 feet) is very important in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

It's also possible for a person to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. This is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, but more is still being learned about this virus. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends people practice frequent "hand hygiene," which is either washing hands with soap or water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. The CDC also recommends routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.

### **Personal Hygiene and Infection Control**

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. CDC recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Frequently and thoroughly wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, if soap and running water are not immediately available, use alcohol-based hand rub containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with sleeve or tissue, and then throw tissue in the trash.
- Maintain appropriate social distancing.
- Where possible, do not use other workers' phones, computers/keyboards, desks, office equipment, or other work tools and equipment. If this is not possible, regular cleaning will be necessary. Use approved germ-killing disinfectants.
- Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of all equipment and surfaces using a disinfectant cleaning spray or disposable wipe.
- Wash/disinfect your hands before having food or drink.
- Stay home if you are sick.

## **Wear a Face Cover**

The CDC recommends wearing cloth or fabric face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. CT Governor Lamont issued guidance that calls for all state employees who may come into proximity with others to use a face cover. DEEP employees are required to wear face covers as follows:

- Employees working outdoors should wear a face covering at all times that the employee is in proximity to coworkers or the public, even at a distance of greater than 6 feet. For staff who interact with the public in the normal course of their work, a face covering should be worn at all times.
- Employees working inside a building or office space should wear a face covering as much as possible, and at all times when in close proximity to others; in spaces shared with others; and when travelling throughout the building.

## **Clean and Disinfect (per CDC)**

- Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use disinfectant.
- Cleaning with soap and water reduces the number of germs, dirt and impurities on the surface. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces.
- Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces.
- More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on level of use.
- High touch surfaces include: Tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.
- Use provided ready-to-use disinfectant.
- Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- Wear required PPE and make sure you have good ventilation while using the product.
- Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used if appropriate for the surface.
- Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection and ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening may not be suitable for disinfection.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.

- Leave solution on the surface for at least 1 minute.

To make a bleach solution, mix:

5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water

OR

4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

You can read more about the CDC guidance for effective cleaning here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>

## **Public Restroom/Bathhouse Cleaning**

- Restrooms should be cleaned and disinfected regularly using an EPA approved disinfecting cleaner, at least once per day and more frequently if there is moderate to heavy use, and as directed by the Park Supervisor.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/park-administrators.html>
- Showers
  - Indoor shower facilities shall be cleaned and disinfected regularly using an EPA approved disinfecting cleaner, at least twice per day, and more frequently if there is heavy use, and as directed by the Park Supervisor. Frequency of shower cleaning may be reduced to once per day if there is limited use of the facility, as directed by the Park Supervisor.
  - If Bathhouse showers have no floor to ceiling dividers, every other shower head will be turned off and the shower taken out of service. Bathhouse showers with floor to ceiling dividers can remain operational.
  - Make sure shower area is free of debris. Clean and disinfect shower walls and high touch surfaces. Spray all surfaces with disinfectant and scrub and wipe all surfaces. Apply second coat of disinfectant on all surfaces and allow to remain wet on the surface following product label instructions. Rinse the area thoroughly to assure that all chemicals have been removed from surfaces.
  - Shower curtains should be cleaned using detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection. Rinse the curtain to assure all chemicals have been removed.
  - Use of a pump sprayer for disinfectant may provide for an efficient and effective application of the product.
  - Outdoor shower facilities should provide adequate social distancing (10' separation), to reduce potential impacts of aerosolized spray.
- Personal Protective Equipment: Staff will be required to wear gloves, safety goggles surgical style disposable face masks, and gowns or other appropriate outerwear defined by public health officials while cleaning. Note that eye protection is not a CDC recommendation for COVID-19 protection but should be incorporated as part of the standard operating procedure to protect eyes from cleaning reagents.
- Although respiratory protection is not required for public restroom and bathhouse cleaning, a filtering facepiece respirator may be requested for voluntary use in

accordance with OSHA and agency requirements. Disposable face coverings should be worn over the filtering facepiece respirator to provide for reuse of the respirator.

Voluntary respirator use requirements and forms are available at:

<https://insidedeep.z13.web.core.windows.net/health-safety.html>.

- All High Touch surfaces are to be sprayed or wiped with disinfecting cleaner.
- Diluted household bleach solutions may be used. When using bleach ensure a contact time of at least 1 minute and allowing proper ventilation during and after application.
- Sinks and counter tops should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Rinse the area thoroughly to assure that all chemicals have been removed from all surfaces. All surfaces should be dried to remove any standing water and residue of cleaning agents.
- Soap must be available for staff and visitors to wash their hands. Make sure bathrooms are continuously stocked with soap and paper towels or automated hand dryers. Hand sanitizer can be made available if soap and water is not available.
- Toilets should be cleaned thoroughly inside and out. These surfaces may be cleaned with abrasive cleansers or other approved cleaning agents prior to disinfection. Flush after cleaning.
- Portable chemical toilets are cleaned less frequently. Encourage public use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Composting, vault and pit toilets should be replaced with portable chemical toilets when possible. When their use is required in remote locations, the toilet seat and common touch points should be cleaned and disinfected at least once per day with an EPA approved disinfecting cleaner. Encourage public use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Urinals must be thoroughly cleaned inside and out.
- Clean the walls and partitions around the urinal using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection. Follow disinfection guidelines.
- Floors must be mopped with an approved disinfecting solution after or instead of sweeping.
- When done, remove gown and dispose of in trash receptacle.
- Remove gloves as to not provide additional contamination of the hands.
- Perform hand hygiene.

## **Cabin Cleaning**

- Personal Protective Equipment: Staff will be required to wear gloves, safety goggles surgical style disposable face masks, and gowns or other appropriate outerwear defined by public health officials while cleaning.
- Gloves are to be discarded and hand hygiene performed before moving to a new cabin.
- Limit close contact with other staff by maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet, when possible.
- Upon arrival to cabin, 100% of the exterior of any fabric or textile seats, couches, cushions, pillows, etc. is to be sprayed with an EPA approved disinfecting spray.
- All high touch areas are to be sprayed or wiped with an EPA approved disinfecting cleaner.
- All games, playing cards and personal items are to be removed from cabins.
- Exterior railing and seating are to be wiped or sprayed with disinfecting solution.

## **Other Areas to Clean: Visitor Center, Exhibits, Offices, Classrooms, Workshop, etc.**

- An increased cleaning schedule should be utilized in all areas of the park.
- High traffic areas should receive added attention.
- Layouts may need to be rearranged to adhere to social distancing guidelines.
- Post signs as reminders to staff and visitors regarding hygiene and operations.

## **Best Practices for Facility Operations**

- Place hand sanitizer at entrances and instruct all to use the hand sanitizer upon entering the building when coming in from offsite.
- Prohibiting entry into the facility for non-essential visitors.
- Interviewing approved visitors about their current health condition and recent travel history.
- Keep track of who enters your building and where they go. If someone becomes infected this information is needed for deep cleaning.
- Encourage employees to take their temperature before they go to work. If they have a temperature above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, they should stay home.
- Do not enter buildings unless absolutely necessary.
- Do not unnecessarily use multiple work locations and enter multiple buildings.
- Only one person permitted at a time in small offices or similar spaces.
- Arrange delivery and pick up of items/materials outside of buildings.
- Use a drop box for keys if possible.
- Try to assign/manage work so one of a kind items are only used by one individual. E.g. keyboards, handheld scanners, one of a kind tools, etc.
- Wear disposable protective gloves if using a shared item.
- Prior to working on vehicles or equipment that have been dropped off for servicing wipe down steering wheel, shift knob, arm rests, controls, control knobs and other common touch points with disinfectant solution/wipes.
- Do not meet in groups – rethink morning and afternoon crew meeting/lunch/break – get creative.
- Where possible, close or restrict break rooms and have employees bring lunches from home and eat at their workstation or in cars. If a break room is needed for meal preparation or storage, wear a face cover at all times, when in this shared space. Obviously, no eating and drinking should occur within this shared space.
- Increase ventilation rates and increase the percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system where possible.
- Wherever possible, segment the workspace into discrete zones. Prohibit employees from entering zones where they are not required to be to perform their jobs.
- Reduce common touch points by opening internal doors where possible.
- Install all no-touch disposal receptacles or remove lids that require contact to open for non-hazardous waste containers unless doing so creates an unsanitary environment.
- Employees should clean their personal workspace at the beginning and the end of every shift.
- Stay hydrated.
- Talk with your staff at least daily and listen to their concerns.

## Guidance for Operating Vehicles and Equipment

- Guidance for the agency's COVID-19 related vehicle requirements and equipment can be found at: <https://ctgovexec.sharepoint.com/sites/DEEP-Intranet/SitePages/Operations-Plans-Safety-Guidance.aspx>

## First Aid

- First aid providers caring for people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should follow standard precautions. If possible, have the victim place a face mask over their nose and mouth and limit contact by staying back at least 6 feet, until that person has done so.
- Try to limit the number of individuals in contact with the sick person. Those who provide direct care for someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should wear respiratory protection, safety goggles or face shield disposable protective gloves and a disposable isolation gown, if possible.
- Following care, first aid providers should perform hand hygiene as they would normally do and discard disposable personal protective equipment (PPE) following usual procedures. Safety goggles should be disinfected with an EPA approved disinfectant.
  - While wearing PPE, clean and disinfect items which have touched the patient. After cleaning, dispose of PPE and perform hand hygiene.

## Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the COVID-19 Response Procedures.

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Signature

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Date