

March 20, 2020

To All State Fire Marshals,

I am urgently writing to you about an essential life safety matter. As states around the nation grapple with how to best address the spread of COVID-19, many have to make tough decisions to shut down “non-essential” businesses. The businesses that remain open are critical to the communities they serve – places like hospitals, nursing homes, grocery stores, etc. The issue that may not be addressed in those decisions is the continuity of fire and life safety systems. Because of that omission in some orders, there is confusion about whether businesses that inspect and maintain these critical fire and life safety systems should be considered “essential” or “life sustaining”. I urge you to advocate for the inclusion of all professions that engage in maintaining fire and life safety systems.

As states work to contain the spread of COVID-19 by limiting which businesses and industries can continue to operate, we strongly feel that those who maintain fire and life safety equipment should be deemed essential and life sustaining. This would include, but not be limited to, portable fire extinguishers, interior equipment, fire hose, pre-engineered suppression systems, fire alarms, and water-based fire sprinklers.

In a time of such uncertainty, it is vital that we ensure that life and property are being adequately protected. It is for that reason that I hope you join us in advocating for deeming that professions dedicated to fire and life safety are essential and life sustaining.

FEMA represents the leading brands of the fire and life safety industry. The association is comprised of four divisions, represented by the following product categories: portable fire extinguishers, interior equipment, fire hose, and pre-engineered suppression systems. These divisions work together in an effort to promote comprehensive fire protection and initial response when disaster strikes.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association