

FIRE EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION



Saving Lives, Protecting Property.

March 26, 2020

Christopher C. Krebs
Director
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528
CISA.CAT@CISA.DHS.GOV

Dear Director Krebs,

We are urgently writing to you about an essential life safety matter. Specifically, the Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association (FEMA) is writing with regard to your Memorandum on the Identification of *Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response* dated March 19, 2020. FEMA is requesting that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security issue clear guidance stating that the workers at companies that produce, distribute, install, inspect, service, repair and maintain all types of fire protection and life safety products and services, and the supply chain for these products and services, are considered "Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers".

As states, and the country as a whole, 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, and grocery stores. The issue that may not be addressed in those decisions is the continuity of fire and life safety equipment. Due to that omission in some orders, there is confusion about whether businesses that inspect and maintain critical fire and life safety equipment, as well as those that support the supply chain, should be considered "essential" or "life sustaining".

FEMA urges you to provide clear guidance stating that the manufacturers, distributors and servicers of fire and life safety equipment are essential critical infrastructure workers. This would include, but not be limited to, portable fire extinguishers, interior equipment, fire hose, pre-engineered suppression systems, fire alarms, water-based fire sprinklers, and backflow preventers.

In a time of such uncertainty, it is vital that we ensure that life and property are being adequately protected and that there is no confusion on who is considered an essential critical infrastructure worker.

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 us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association

FIRE EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION

Executive Director: **THOMAS ASSOCIATES, INC.**

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