



# INFO

CVD INSP 315 B 032020

## Inspections During the COVID-19 Outbreak

10 Dec 2020

This communication provides important updates to requirements for inspection protocols as we continue to do everything we can to minimize the spread of COVID-19 throughout the construction industry, to protect city inspectors, other city workers and their families, and to fulfill our commitment to the health, safety and welfare of our workforce and the public. We are equally committed to providing the community with the inspection services they expect and need.

Construction Services & Inspections will continue as we have done conducting the building, plumbing, electrical and mechanical inspections necessary to administer the Minnesota Building Code. The city is required by Minnesota state regulations to administer the building code and conduct inspections, ensuring that buildings and systems are constructed and installed safely and meet minimum required standards.

The COVID pandemic continues to take its toll on all of us in many ways. We are each concerned for our own health and that of our friends and family, we are all suffering the economic impact in one way or another, and we are limited in the interactions we are able to have with others.

So far this fall, Duluth Construction Services and Inspections has had inspectors quarantined for a total of 10 weeks due to close contact with positive COVID-19 cases. Some of these contacts occurred at work on construction job sites. CSI inspectors are routinely entering multiple job sites every day. One inspector can be in contact with 15 or more separate work groups throughout the city in one day. They are at risk of cumulative close contact with COVID positive individuals, even if their interactions are short.

Inspectors will continue to do inspections remotely when possible. When a job site visit is necessary, practices consistent with the COVID work plan for city of Duluth employees must be in place before an inspection is scheduled.

City of Duluth guidelines do not allow city employees that have been in close contact within the last 14 days with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, with a person showing COVID symptoms, or with a person who is pursuing COVID-19 testing due to the development of symptoms, to have access to city facilities. This protects city workers from spreading the virus to each other at work, to their families, and to others in the community.

***These standards must be in place at all facilities while CSI inspectors are on the site. When an inspection is requested, the inspector will ask the person requesting the inspection whether these jobsite safety practices are in place before scheduling an inspection.***

“Site” means any area or room on the premises where inspectors’ access is needed to accomplish inspections and follow up work, including outdoor areas.

- No one on the site can have had close contact within the last 14 days with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, with a person showing COVID symptoms, or with a person who is pursuing COVID-19 testing due to the development of symptoms.
- Occupancy of the area or room on the premises where inspectors’ access is needed to accomplish inspections and follow up work must be reduced to minimize the number of interactions between job site workers and inspectors. Only personnel necessary for the inspection should be in the vicinity of the inspector at any time on the job site.
- All people present on the job site must be masked.
- Distancing of at least six feet from inspectors must be practiced, even when wearing masks.

CSI inspectors are providing inspection services for required inspections at jobsites and residences that provide a safe environment. If the inspector arrives at the job site and finds that these protocols are not in place, they will leave the site, and the inspection will need to be rescheduled. This increases the risk for delays and costly corrections, but it does not eliminate the requirement for the inspection. Ultimately, mitigating the risk of infection for all workers will reduce unnecessary slowing of construction work and shorten the time until we can all return to normal.

Construction Services & Inspections is committed above all to the health and safety of the community. The COVID-19 outbreak presents challenges to all of us as we work to build a safe community. Working together, we can keep construction projects moving forward while doing our best to reduce risks of the spread of the virus.

(This sheet can be printed and posted at job site.)

## **Duluth Construction Services' Inspections Site COVID Protection Requirements**

***These standards must be at all facilities while CSI inspectors are on the site.***

***When an inspection is requested, the inspector will ask the person requesting the inspection whether these job site safety practices are in place before scheduling an inspection.***

“Site” means any area or room on the premises where inspectors’ access is needed to accomplish their inspection and related work.

- No one on the site can have had close contact within the last 14 days with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, with a person showing COVID symptoms, or with a person who is pursuing COVID-19 testing due to the development of symptoms.
- Occupancy of the area or room on the premises where inspectors’ access is needed to accomplish inspections and follow up work must be reduced to minimize the number of interactions between job site workers and inspectors. Only personnel necessary for the inspection should be in the vicinity of the inspector at any time on the job site.
- All people present on the job site must be masked.
- Distancing of at least six feet from inspectors is required, even when wearing masks.

If the inspector arrives at the job site and finds that these protocols are not in place, they will leave the site, and the inspection will need to be rescheduled. This increases the risk for delays and costly corrections, but it does not eliminate the requirement for the inspections.