



Alan H. Cathcart, Director of Public Works

## **COVID-19 CPW Continuity of Operations Update**

**Date: 4/7/20**

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Concord Public Works has reviewed all essential duties and adapted staffing and associated programs to protect the health and safety of our community and help slow the spread of Coronavirus and in accordance with local, state, or federal emergency declarations. While town offices are closed to customers, and coverage by public works staff has been modified to focus on essential services, to the greatest extent practicable, I am pleased to report that a considerable amount of work continues to be accomplished. The following summary provides an overview of coverage and core program activities that have been extracted from a more detailed CPW “Continuity of Operations Plan” (COOP), developed with the support and assistance of CPW program managers.

### **Essential Services**

- Provision of safe and reliable drinking water
- Provision of consistent and compliant sanitary sewer conveyance and treatment
- Collection and disposal of solid waste
- Performance of cemetery burials
- Maintain safe and accessible public roadways

### **Department Procedures**

Department operations have been modified to promote increased work place hygiene and social distancing, to limit possible exposure and slow the spread of COVID-19. As noted previously, CPW offices are physically closed to the public, but employees are available and remain engaged by limited on-site staffing, remote work stations, phone and email. To this end, CPW has effectively developed a reduced on-site staffing plan across all divisions of public works. The goal is to provide essential coverage, but minimize physical interactions with supporting co-workers, the general public, and special service providers.

### **Administration**

#### **Interim Procedures**

- On-site managerial and administrative presence will be limited to time-sensitive operations support functions including; prioritizing, planning, assigning and

supervising all operational working groups (on-site and remote services), processing of contracts, pay-requisitions, personnel documents, and other sensitive documents as needed, and any or all other essential statutory, regulatory, and organizational functions. This will also include regular coordination and communications with Town leadership.

- Coordination meetings are generally performed via call conferencing on an as needed basis.
- Each CPW line division (Administration, Engineering, Highway/Grounds and Water/Sewer) is served by an administrative assistant who is cross-trained with their department counterparts to provide support for core administrative functions. This includes processing of routine payrolls, approved pay requisitions, creation of purchase orders, change order, etc.

## **Engineering Division**

### **Interim Procedures**

- On-site managerial and administrative presence is limited to time-sensitive operations support functions including; processing of vendor and contractor pay requisitions, critical infrastructure planning and program management needs, use of technology and equipment required to advance time sensitive infrastructure improvement projects, and associated environmental and regulatory compliance activities.
- On a very limited basis, field work/inspections of prioritized infrastructure improvement initiatives may be accommodated, on a case by case basis.

### **Development Project Review**

The Engineering Division will continue to provide regular technical support and plan review for the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Natural Resources Commission. The reviews are provided in written form scanned and conveyed to staff electronically.

### ***Permits - Street Opening and Driveway***

All licensed contractors have been directed to download and utilize the electronic applications available on the website. Payment, insurance certificates and bond information may be submitted via mail/FedEx/etc. Completed and finalized permits will be signed, scanned, and returned to the applicant via email or fax. The black box in front of Public Works Offices at 135 Keyes Road may also be used for the receipt of completed permit applications, fees, and documents. The current provisions for permitting emergency street openings after-the-fact will continue.

### ***Construction Inspections – Cambridge Turnpike, Street Openings and Driveways***

This field activity will continue as needed. The listed staff along with personnel from the engineering consulting firm, CMA will conduct inspections of construction work related to the Cambridge Turnpike improvements. Inspections by Engineering of permitted street openings and driveways will be authorized on a case-by-case basis and scheduled by the contractor by phone call at least 48 hours in advance. Inspectors are responsible for social distance

awareness. If necessary, personnel from other CPW divisions can assist with spot checking of construction work.

### ***Record Requests***

The typical Engineering record information requested is available electronically. Division staff will assist with records requests over the phone and send electronic documents (scans, etc.) via email or place for pickup in designated area outside of Public Works Offices.

### **Development and implementation of Critical Infrastructure/Priority Projects**

Engineering staff will continue to give the following projects high priority in order to reduce delays and unnecessary expenditures as well as to address important infrastructure needs.

#### ***Cambridge Turnpike Improvements Project***

Staff will provide inspection, utility coordination and deal with traffic and resident issues as well as manage the consultant's (CMA's) work to keep the construction on schedule.

#### ***FY 20 Roads Program***

Design work by consultant, HSI will continue to stay on schedule for bidding first for the water replacement project and later on the road rehabilitation in the Prescott Street neighborhood. Engineering staff will perform in-house designs of additional streets, coordinate with utilities and communicate with neighborhoods via mailings.

Additional projects that will continue as a priority under the FY 20 program include (i) Arterial Mill and Fill in an effort to keep travel on these roadways safe and (ii) Crack Sealing for preserving the life of pavement on several miles of streets.

#### ***Complete Streets***

Designs will continue on Hubbard St, Commonwealth Ave and the Sudbury Rd crosswalk in order to meet the schedule (summer 2021) for the expenditures of the grant. It may become necessary to have neighborhood coordination on preliminary designs via mail or email, etc.

#### ***Pavement Markings***

Pavement markings will be refreshed in two phases. A change order to an existing contract will address pavement markings essentially in the downtown area in the spring to keep traffic and pedestrian operations safe. A new contract that will include pilot testing of a limited amount of thermoplastic has been put out to bid for town-wide markings.

#### ***MS-4 Stormwater Compliance***

Staff will continue to work with Environmental Partners Group (EPG) to maintain compliance with its MS4 Permit including; initial research on Town owned facilities

to ensure they meet requirements set forth by the MS4 Permit; as-built research on 15 municipal facilities to draft a tailored Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) for each facility; and outfall screening to determine illicit discharge detection and elimination (IDDE) as part of a dry weather investigations in accordance with year 2 Annual Reporting requirements.

### ***Other Operational Functions***

Other functions that will continue on a limited basis include reviews of private development plans and permits, advancing projects of lower priority, completing certain GIS tasks and planning for improvements in division's standards and processes.

## **Highway & Grounds Division**

### ***Interim Procedures***

- Highway and Grounds Division operators have been grouped into teams to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transferal between working groups. These operations groups include both Equipment Operators and Park and Tree Specialists and a member of management. As circumstances allow, these teams will report to regular duty on an alternating, rotational basis.
- All labor employees are on-call 24/7.
- Cemetery Supervisor will be on-site as needed to monitor landscape contractors and for funerals/preparations. Additional labor support will be provided to the Cemetery operation as needed. The Cemetery Supervisor will be on-call 24/7.

### **Highway Services**

Services for outside operations including roadway/sidewalk repair, traffic control, street sweeping, drainage maintenance, etc. will continue as modified per Department wide interim guidelines. Services will be limited and prioritized based on public safety, regulatory and preventive maintenance requirements. Highway staff will be available to provide assistance to other Town departments as needed. Requests should be submitted to the Superintendent for prioritization and delegation.

### **Parks/Open Space/Grounds Services**

The Division will monitor Town owned parks, fields and open spaces daily. The Division will ensure open spaces can be used safely, free of trash, debris and hazards. Areas will be inspected and should items be identified, they will be addressed in a timely manner. Athletic turf maintenance may be deferred in the interim as all organized athletic activities have been cancelled by the Town. Any deferred maintenance will be addressed as the Division continues to work through the modified work plan. Project planning will continue if feasible, working with 3<sup>rd</sup> party engineering.

### **Tree Services**

Essential roadway clearing of trees and similar that block emergency egress and/or pose a risk

to public safety/public nuisance will be addressed as CPW receives notification. On an interim basis CPW will postpone any tree removal hearing requests indefinitely. There are no scheduled hearings and no requests at this time. Emergency tree removals do not require public hearings and will be completed under the direction of the Tree Warden as needed. Emergency removals will be completed by H&G staff or the Town's contracted tree services company (Mayer Tree Services). Tree planting activities will be deferred.

### **Cemetery Services & Interim Procedures**

CPW will continue to provide funeral operations at the Sleepy Hallow Cemetery as listed in the Town's Cemetery Rules & Regulations. The Cemetery Supervisor will coordinate all funeral activities and will request additional labor support through the Superintendent as needed. Additional support will be provided by H&G staff. Contracted landscaping operations (Einstein's) will continue. Should the Contractor cease operations, department staff will schedule in-house maintenance as needed under the direction of the Superintendent.

### **Fleet Services**

Highway & Grounds will continue to provide fleet services within CPW. The Fleet Supervisor will prioritize emergency repairs as required to support the operation. The Fleet Supervisor will monitor the CPW fuel depot to ensure proper operation and fuel level. CPW will utilize CMLP as a back-up fuel station. Concord Oil located on Lowell Road, will serve as an emergency back-up should Town fuel depots become out of service or a fuel shortage occur. Should other Town departments require fleet maintenance from CPW, they could contact the Superintendent to coordinate support.

### **Solid Waste Program**

#### **Interim Procedures**

- On-site managerial and administrative presence will be limited with allowance for time-sensitive essential operations support including processing of vendor and contractor pay requisitions, administration of customer service needs and accounts, misc. and generation and administration of any associated regulatory compliance activities.
- The Curbside Program phone 978-318-3240 messages will be monitored and responded to by public works administrators during normal office hours. Customers with questions on the program are encouraged to call and leave a message.

### **Curbside Trash and Recycling Collection Services**

Curbside trash and recycling services provided by the Town to residential and municipal customers (including schools) will continue to be performed as scheduled. If a pickup is missed, customers call 978-318-3240 and staff communicate to the route manager of Waste Management Inc.

Curbside collection will continue as normal for all subscribers regardless of the presence or

color of barrel stickers or tags through April 30. This accommodation will be re-evaluated as conditions merit. Program updates will continue to be posted on the solid waste website [www.concordma.gov/recycle](http://www.concordma.gov/recycle) and communicated to Waste Management route manager.

New curbside customers will continue to be able to sign up for service by filling out an application form on website, mailing or dropping applications off to Treasury, calling Public Works so we can alert Waste Management and providing the resident with two recycling bins by setting them outside of 133 Keyes Road with the new customers address.

### **Dumpster Collection and Disposal Services**

Collection and disposal of trash placed in dumpsters will continue as regularly scheduled.

### **Public Park and Street Barrel Collection and Disposal Services**

Curbside collections of street trash barrels, recycling cages and park toters via Waste Management will continue as scheduled based on reduced winter schedule. CPW Highway and Grounds will continue to help monitor status of street and park barrels. Need for additional Park barrels normally distributed around April 1st each year will be evaluated in light of recreation area closures and CPW staffing plans.

### **Plastic Bag Reduction Bylaw**

In accordance with a March 25, 2020 Order issued by the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, to provide continuation of grocery and pharmaceutical services while additionally reducing exposure of shoppers and employees to COVID-19, and pursuant to the authority granted by G. L. c. 17, § 2A and with the approval of the Governor and the Public Health Council, it has been declared that *“Grocery store and pharmacy employees shall not perform bagging of retail products if reusable checkout bags are used and customers at grocery stores and pharmacies shall not use reusable checkout bags until further notice.”*

In accordance with this Order, Concord Public Works will cease enforcement actions for what would otherwise be deemed a violation of the Town of Concord’s Plastic Bag Reduction Bylaw (Article 35, 2015 TM).

### **Community Waste Collection Events**

Scheduling of historically popular and well attended waste collection “events” are being evaluated on a case by case basis. Updates will continue to be issued through town website venues and various social media avenues.

- Business Recycling Event - April 3rd - Canceled
- Drop-off Swap-off - May 2nd - Canceled
- Hazardous Waste Event - April 18 - Canceled

### **Compost Site**

Due to strong community interest the Town elected to open the compost site, located at 755 Walden Street, for a special trial yard waste collection event on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> from 8 AM to 2 PM to allow residents to dispose of leaves, grass clippings and brush only. To eliminate concerns regarding social distancing, no paint products will be accepted. Participating residents

will be instructed to remain in their cars except to off-load materials, follow the traffic patterns and respect the social distancing guidelines. To reduce over-crowding, residents at odd number addresses only attend the event on Thursday, April 9; even number addresses only on Friday, April 10 and any Concord resident on Saturday, April 11.

The site will continue to be offered for Concord residential use only. Last year's green compost site sticker displayed on the vehicle will be used as proof of residency, however, reasonable accommodation will be made to those residents who, for whatever reason, do not presently have one.

## **Water/Sewer Division**

### **Division Procedures**

- On-site managerial and administrative presence will be limited, with the necessary allowance for time-sensitive functions including processing of vendor and contractor pay requisitions, misc. service design and review activities, administration of customer account and meter maintenance work, misc. planning and program management needs, and associated regulatory compliance activities.
- Managerial and administrative staff will continue to be available to perform essential duties and emergency support service, as need.
- Water and Sewer Division operators have been grouped into teams to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transferal between working groups. These operations groups include both distribution/collection system operators and pump-station and treatment system operators. As circumstances allow, these teams will report to regular duty on an alternating, rotational basis.
- All operations staff are available for on-call (emergency) support - 24/7.
- On a very limited basis, field work/inspections will be authorized by field supervisor to allow for time sensitive essential service support or emergency system maintenance/repair.
- Staff will not enter an occupied structure unless they have been authorized to do so by an immediate supervisor and only if an appropriate situational assessment has been performed which shall include an ensuring site-specific health and safety protocols are in place including; only one responsible party (i.e. homeowner or representative (i.e. contractor) is present, an appropriate assessment of additional occupant(s) has been made (i.e. location, health conditions...) and appropriate protective measures can be taken to allow for extreme social distancing practices and PPE where appropriate.

### **Water Production/Treatment**

Water production and treatment facilities will continue to be maintained by licensed operators in accordance with state mandated standards and guidelines. Reliability of operation is also dependent upon third party vendors and contractors support such as treatment chemicals, misc. parts, and specialized equipment technicians.

### **Wastewater Conveyance/Pumping**

All sewer pumping facilities will continue to be operated in accordance with state mandated standards and guidelines. Reliability of operation is also dependent upon third party vendors and contractors support such as treatment chemicals, misc. parts, and specialized equipment technicians. Maintenance will be limited to emergency responses required to maintain pumping equipment respond to instrumentation failures.

### **Wastewater Treatment**

Concord's Wastewater Treatment serves 1/3 of the community, primarily in the vicinity of Concord and West Concord Centers. The treatment facility is operated by a third party contractor, Woodard & Curran. Woodard & Curran has a staff of three licensed operators who perform routine service and maintenance of this facility.

### **Water Quality – Regulatory Compliance**

Water quality testing will continue to be performed in accordance with state and federal requirements as detailed in the Safe Drinking Water Act. Staff continue to monitor regulatory developments as they pertain to compliance sampling, particularly in the area of distribution system monitoring requirements/guidance when compliance requires access to sample sites located within residential and institutional facilities. This includes Cross Connection Control inspection and testing services.

### **Water Distribution System / Sewer Collection System Operations & Maintenance**

Operations personnel will continue to be prepared to respond to emergency water distribution and sewer collection system disturbances including major water leaks and sewer back-ups. Preventative operations and maintenance activities such as water main flushing and inspection/maintenance of critical sewer manholes will be done on a limited basis and in a manner that allows for necessary protection of individual operators. Certain preventative maintenance and inspection activities such as sewer main cleaning and Inflow/Infiltration work are not deemed to be essential and will be temporarily deferred.

### **Water/Sewer Line Service**

Operations personnel will continue to respond to private water and sewer service needs and upsets such as water service leaks and sewer service back-ups. Responses will be limited to isolation of water service at the property line, whenever possible. Inspection of service repairs, replacements, or new installations will be done as availability of operations personnel allow.

### **Customer Service: Accounts & Metering**

Water and sewer customers will continue to receive monthly meter reading and billings. Changes or adjustments to accounts will continue to be provided, as availability of personnel allows. Customer service inquiries will continue to be addressed by the utility customer service agents with response time delays anticipated based upon number and availability of staff. Final account readings will be based on remote reading capabilities and will not be validated with inspection of meter located within occupied structures. If a meter reading is determined to be questionable or unreliable, the user fee may be assessed based upon an estimate that will include consideration of usage history, whenever possible. New meters will be installed and

service accounts established on a case by case basis, with prior approval of supervisor and in accordance with health and safety guidance noted above.

### **Public Water Fountains**

Activation of public water fountains has been deferred upon the recommendation of the Public Health Director.

### **Water Quality Consultations**

Technical support staff will continue to provide customers with consultation on water quality issues, as needed. If the issues is related to an existing/ongoing concern identified inside a customer's premises, staff will do everything possible to resolve the issue over the phone. If this is not possible and a site-visit is required for additional assessment, efforts will be made to provide support by accessing an outside spigot. If this is not possible, alternative efforts may involve having occupant collect sample in specified sample container with collection made at an agreed upon time.

### **Water Conservation Consultations**

Staff will continue to provide customers with consultation on water conservation interests, as needed. If the issues are related to an existing/ongoing concern identified inside a customer's premises, staff will do everything possible to resolve the issue over the phone.

### **Water/Sewer Service Applications**

Water/Sewer service applications are required by owners/contractors interested in making changes to an existing private service or adding a service to a property/structures deemed to be eligible based upon associated Rules and Regulations. While hardcopy applications are not currently being accepted, staff is developing an on-line water/sewer service applications process that will allow customers to submit applications for all existing water/sewer service needs including termination of service, changes to service, new service, temporary service, installation of backflow devices, flow tests, etc.

### **Development and implementation of Critical Infrastructure/Priority Projects**

Water/Sewer staff will continue to give the following projects high priority in order to reduce delays and unnecessary expenditures as well as to address important infrastructure needs.

#### **Nagog Pond Filtration Plant/Intake – Permitting/Design:**

Staff continues to work with Environmental Partners Group (EPG) to advance permitting and design activities of the various construction phasing plan of the Nagog Pond water treatment facility and associated in-take pipe.

#### **Lowell Road and Assabet Sewer Pump Station Rehabilitation Project:**

Staff continues to work with D&C Construction (Weymouth, MA) and Kleinfelder (design engineer) in preparation of the planned rehabilitation of the Lowell Road and Assabet sewer pump stations.