DATE: March 18, 2020

TO: ALL SMARCA CONTRACTORS

FROM: John Quarnstrom and Jim Bigham

RE: COVID-19 Update

As many of you may have heard, all construction jobs are being shut down in certain parts of the country, including a three week “shelter in place” in the six county San Francisco Area and a two week shut down in Boston. We do not anticipate similar action in Minnesota at this time. However, politicians and owners do tend to look to other areas of the country when determining how to proceed at home. In an effort to slow the impulse to jump to a shutdown, the Minnesota Building Trades and affiliated Contractor Associations have developed a Joint Statement on efforts undertaken to maintain safe construction jobsites. The attached Statement is available for your use to publicize these efforts and alleviate concerns owners may have surrounding work on their buildings. This Statement is also being circulated to politicians and public owners.

As a reminder, we recommend employers implement the following precautionary procedures on jobsites:

1. Sick employees should be told to stay home.
2. If an employee reports for work when they are sick or becomes sick, they should be separated from other employees and sent home.
3. Employees should be told to wash their hands frequently. We understand hand washing stations have been installed at a number of jobsites. Tools should not be shared unless they have been sanitized.
4. Employees should be reminded to sneeze and cough into a tissue or their elbow and avoid touching their face.
5. Increase physical space between workers. A minimum of six feet is preferred.
6. Decrease social contacts by limiting in-person meetings and using electronic communication when feasible. Reduce the number of workers that gather in one place, including for breaks and meals. Adding more tables in break areas may allow more social distancing.
7. Limit the number of people allowed on jobsites. Non-essential vendors, deliveries and visitors should not be allowed to enter. We understand some delivery drivers are being told they must stay in their vehicle when feasible.

Additional changes being implemented in office settings include:

1. Encouraging work from home when feasible, especially employees with medical conditions.
2. Staggered work schedules.
3. No group meetings or gathering of more than 10 people.
4. Limiting non-essential work travel.
5. Increased cleaning and sanitizing efforts.
6. No non-employee visitors or implementing pre-screening of office visitors.
We are in Day 3 of 15 Days to Slow the Spread. It is very important to implement these precautions with the goal of decreasing community transmission of the COVID-19 virus. The sooner we are able to get ahead of the spreading of the virus, the sooner we can begin to repair the damage to our economy.