

The Builder



Late April 2020: Special COVID Update Edition

Boards, Commissions can hold "e-meetings"

The General Assembly approved on Tuesday Governor Northam's budget amendments which temporarily expands the authority for local governing bodies, planning commissions, local/regional boards and commissions, and common interest community associations to meet electronically for a broader scope of reasons.

This gives these entities the authority to meet electronically to discuss land-use applications and other development/construction-related applications during the current State of Emergency. The HBACV, HBAV and other stakeholders advocated for these amendments to ensure that local governments may resume their customary business during the State of Emergency. Intended to expand the authority for local governing bodies and

appointed commissions to meet electronically to review/take action on land-use applications (and other matters), it still remains to be seen how each local governing body and local government attorneys interpret and implement the new statute.

The HBACV is contacting local jurisdictions to determine how local boards will use this expanded meeting option. If you have projects that will be going before local planning commissions and boards, please contact them to insure you are informed of these meetings and can opt to participate.

Land-use / constructions applications are considered to be "addressing the emergency" given that delay of those applications would [worsen the negative economic impacts of the pandemic](#).



Your HBACV membership was never more important than today as we work to keep housing essential

First and foremost, the health and safety of our HBACV members is our top priority. Our thoughts go out to you, your employees and your families during this challenging time. The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented event that has drastically affected the worldwide economy, including the residential construction industry. Your local association has been working hand-in-hand with those at the local, state and national levels to insure residential construction and housing industry businesses keep their doors open and their operations moving ahead.

This is why maintaining your membership is crucial. When you consider renewing your annual 3-in-1 membership, think about the actions we have taken and continue to take to help our industry get through this crisis:

- Working with and lobbying the Northam Administration to have our member businesses considered essential. This has allowed our members to continue - albeit with safe distancing and safe pandemic practices - to build, sell, lend, remodel, supply and work.
- Working with the local inspections and permitting offices so that members know the ever-changing landscape of procedures, policy and practices when it comes to getting required approvals, permits and paperwork.
- Providing members with business continuity resources, job-site safety support and charitable community efforts. We have also tried our best NOT to fill your inbox with useless “we are there for you” messages.
- Responding quickly to provide resources and lead an effort to support important special funding legislation at both the state and national level.
- Assisting the NAHB in getting the Department of Homeland Security to designate single-family and multifamily construction as an “Essential Infrastructure Business,” meaning that construction can continue in places under stay-at-home orders.

We are working tirelessly on behalf of our members. I encourage you to contact us for resources and information related not just to coronavirus but to learn more of the additional work your association can do on your behalf. Please feel free to call (841-7588) to discuss any specific resources you'd like to see in the coming months or concerns you may have. Here at the Home Building Association of Central Virginia, we know that now more than ever, we are stronger when we act together.



Building Permits, Inspections office new schedules

1. Bedford County Building Inspections and Permitting office is closed to the public. The department will conduct field inspections and permitting can be done online. Staff will be available to receive phone calls (540) 586-7616. The office will consider approving work through pictures, third party or written notices. These will be done on a case by case basis. Look for updates and forms on this website:

<https://www.bedfordcountyva.gov/departments/community-development/building-inspections>

2. City of Lynchburg Building Inspections and Permitting office (455-3910) has closed to the general public. Please call ahead (445-3910) for information about access, permitting and inspections. Forms are available online. The department will continue to conduct field inspections and permitting can be done online. Look for updates at this website: <http://www.lynchburgva.gov/new-construction>

3. Amherst County Building Inspections and Permitting office is closed to the public. The department will continue to conduct field inspections and limited permitting can be done with forms found online. Staff will be available to return phone messages. Expect a 30-minute to 60-minute delay in returned call. Please call 946-9302. Please state the reason for the call. If requesting an inspection please provide the permit number and how soon you are seeking the inspection. Updates at this website:

<https://www.countyofamherst.com/departments/division.php?structureid=106>

4. Campbell County Building Inspections and Permitting office is closed to the public. Builders and others requesting permits are asked to call (434) 332-9596. The office will then provide an access to the online portal and walk you through the process. For questions you can also email directly to buildinginspections@campbellcountyva.gov If requesting a field inspection please call or email and provide the permit number and how soon you are seeking the inspection. Look for updates at this website:

<https://www.co.campbell.va.us/154/Building-Permits-Inspections>

5. Appomattox County Building Inspections and Permitting office is allowing limited access via the main office vestibule. Forms are available online and in the vestibule area. Builders and others requesting permits find the forms online. Completed forms can be dropped off or emailed to Inspections@appomattoxcountyva.gov . The office phone is (434) 352-8183. Inspection questions can also be direct to Lonnie Hamlet at (434) 610-2616. If requesting an inspection please provide the permit number. Look for updates at this website: <https://www.appomattoxcountyva.gov/your-government/departments/community-development/building-inspections>

April 30 is deadline for Scholarship Applications

The application window has been extended until April 30 for the HBACV annual Scholarship competition. We have also dropped the requirement of having a signature from the school guidance office or main office. The HBACV provides four college or Trade School scholarship grants each spring. Parents of eligible children or grandchildren can get an application on the HBACV website or from the HBACV office.

To qualify, the applicant must:

a. be the child or grandchild (by blood, marriage, or adoption) of an owner or employee of a company that is a current member in good standing of the Home Building Association of Central Virginia.

b. a high school senior OR undergraduate college student.

Scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis to students who demonstrate a commitment to academics, leadership capabilities and an entrepreneurial spirit. Financial need is also a consideration.

Qualified applicants must be graduating seniors of a public or private high school in the city of Lynchburg or the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Campbell County and plan to attend an accredited 2-year or 4-year community college, college or trade school in the United States.

Application deadline is April 30, 2020.

Applications must be received in the HBACV office no later than 5:30 pm on April 30.

Applications can be submitted in person, by regular mail or as email attachments. (20334 Timberlake Road, Suite 3, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or bob@hbacv.org).

[CLICK HERE](#) for Application online

HBACV EVENTS UPDATE

1) The HBACV 10,000 & More Raffle: This event has been postponed. New tentative date is July 31, but is dependent on COVID safe distancing guidelines. Still set for The Glass House in downtown Lynchburg. Remaining tickets will go on sale in mid-June. Note: An early fall dates are also being considered.

2) Learning Programs and Events: All HBACV Lunch & Learn sessions on builder rebates, Red Cross OSHA/First aid classes and State Uniform Code update classes remain canceled through June because of the statewide stay at home order.

3) HBACV Scholarship Golf Tournament: Currently scheduled at London Downs for August 21 (Friday). Expecting 25+ teams and the format follows same event-day schedule as in the past. Robert O'Brian is again event chairman.

4) HBAV Annual State Conference has been canceled: This event was scheduled for June in Virginia Beach. Any pre-paid registrations will be refunded.

No changes yet to statewide stay at some order

Governor Ralph Northam's statewide Stay at Home order to protect the health and safety of Virginians and mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus, or COVID-19 remains in place until June 10. However amendments are being considered to open some additional businesses. Thus far the impact of the order

For HBACV Members involved in the construction and housing industry this order will have limited impact - If you are already following the safe distancing; 10-or less employees/patrons gathered (five is preferred) and crew transport requirements. This new order strongly urges that you and your business limit travel and transportation to essential needs and maintain OSHA and State guidelines for a safe and COVID-free workplace.

has effectively reduced the overall spread of the coronavirus in the Commonwealth.

Virginia had 10,998 COVID-19 cases, 372 deaths as of Thursday.

The order directs all Virginians to stay home except for allowable travel, including to seek medical attention, work, care for family or household members, obtain goods and services like groceries, prescriptions, and others as outlined in Executive Order Fifty-Three, and engage in outdoor activities while follow strict social distancing (six-foot minimum) requirements.

The order has impacted unemployment and as of Thursday 84,000 Virginians had applied for unemployment benefits.

At the time of the order, Northam said, "We are in a public health crisis, and we need everyone to take this seriously and act responsibly. Our message to Virginians is clear: stay home. We know this virus spreads primarily through human-to-human

contact, and that's why it's so important that people follow this order and practice social distancing. I'm deeply grateful to everyone for their cooperation during this unprecedented and difficult time."

The full text of the current Executive **Order Fifty-Five can be found here**. For the latest information about the COVID-19 outbreak, visit **virginia.gov/coronavirus or [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)**.

BUILDER CONFIDENCE PLUNGES 42 POINTS OVER PANDEMIC

Reflecting the growing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, builder confidence in the market for newly-built single-family homes plunged 42 points in April to 30, according to the latest NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index. The decline was the largest single monthly change in the history of the index and marks the lowest builder confidence reading since June 2012. It is also the first time that builder confidence has been in negative territory (below 50) since June 2014.

“This unprecedented drop in builder confidence is due exclusively to the coronavirus outbreak across the nation, as unemployment has skyrocketed and gaps in the supply chain have hampered construction activities,” said NAHB Chairman Dean Mon.

“Meanwhile, there continues to be some confusion over builder eligibility for the Paycheck Protection Program, as some builders have successfully submitted loan applications while others have not been able to. NAHB is working with the White House, Treasury and Congress to get the broadest builder participation possible. New legislation providing additional funding is expected to pass and be signed into law before week's end.

Home building remains an essential business throughout most of the nation, and by summer buyers should return to the marketplace.”

“In January and February new home sales (were) at their highest pace since the Great Recession,” said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. “To show how hard and fast this outbreak has hit the housing sector, a recent poll of our members reveals that 96% reported that virus mitigation efforts were hurting buyer traffic, disrupting residential construction and the overall economy, the need and demand for housing remains acute.

COVID leads to sharp decline in housing starts

Reflecting the growing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, total housing starts decreased 22.3% in March from a downwardly revised February reading to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.22 million units, according to a report from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development and Commerce Department. Meanwhile, overall permits declined 6.8% to 1.35 million.

The March reading of 1.22 million starts is the number of housing units builders would begin if they kept this pace for the next 12 months. Within this overall number, single-family starts decreased 17.5% to an 856,000 seasonally adjusted annual rate. The multifamily sector, which includes apartment buildings and condos, decreased 31.7% to a 360,000 pace.

It is worth noting that there are currently 534,000 single-family homes currently under construction and 684,000 apartments.

HBACV continues to keep our industry essential, safe

The HBACV office remains open and continues to update members and provide materials regarding workplace safety and processes. We are also maintaining weekly contact with local Building Inspections/Permits offices to gather and distribute information on the ongoing changes of office procedures and processes. A specific email to builder members is sent out regularly about this.

Several HBACV members participated in the April 16th Stand Down / Worksite Safety event, taking time to review best practices to manage work safety at the job site, including safe distancing, crew transport and best hygiene/cleanliness

practices. Workers on home building sites should follow guidance from health officials. This includes maintaining a distance of no less than six feet with others at all times, limiting to 10 the number of workers on a job site, ensuring the proper sanitation of common surfaces, and not directly sharing equipment.

It is imperative that our members continue to follow the COVID-19 safety guidelines so we continue to maintain an essential business designation. States that did not receive this “essential” designation (New York, Massachusetts., Michigan, Washington.) are struggling in ways we are not.

HBAV Blood Drive

There is no known end date in the fight against coronavirus and the need for blood and platelet donors is greater than ever. The Home Builders Association of Virginia (HBAV) and the HBACV is asking our local membership to give blood to save lives. You can make an appointment by clicking [here](#). Please do not feel discouraged if there is not an immediate appointment available - patients still need you. During this uncertain time, we encourage you to make blood donation appointments for the weeks ahead to ensure a stable supply throughout this pandemic..

COVID Worksite safety webinar

Keeping Your Job Site and Employees Safe

Fri. April 24, 11 a.m. ET

Guidelines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), OSHA and other agencies are rapidly evolving in an effort to contain the spread of coronavirus. This live webinar, led by Bradford Hammock of Littler Mendelson P.C., will provide the latest safety information that every employer and employee should use to reduce risk, exposure and impact on the job site.

Visit the [registration page](#) to learn more, register and submit your questions today.

HBACV Leadership List

2020 Officers & Executive Committee:

Joe Hepler - President
Jim Minear * - 1st Vice President
Sandy Speck - 2nd Vice President
Chris Hargis - Associates Vice President
Jeff Wieczorek - Secretary/Treasurer
Brent Lilly - Past President

2020 Board of Directors

Tammy Mikkelson - Movement Mortgage
Mike Forren - Select Bank
Allen Dukes - BB&T
Sandy Speck - Assurance Financial
Matt Yeatman - Central VA Construction
Barry Layne - DS Zechini Builders
Gordon Cudd - Jadon Builders
Robert O'Brian - Lyn. Ready-Mix
Matt Holley - AquaBarrier
Terry Morcom - Morcom Builders
Rosalie Richman - BB&T
Rich Edwards - Bank of the James Mort.
John Hopkins - Boxley
Laura Borel - Francis Oil

HBACV Executive Officer:

Bob Morgan

HBAV Legislative Committee:

Chris Hargis, HBACV rep

HBAV Builder Committee & Director:

Joe Hepler, HBACV rep

HBAV Board of Directors:

Sandy Speck

NAHB National Representative:

Terry Morcom

* leave of absence until 10/2020

Job Site Safety Info Available from NAHB, HBAV and HBACV

Your local, state and national associations have developed packets in both English and Spanish to help builders maintain the COVID-19 Job Site Safety Standard. The packet includes three easy steps to help you:

Step 1: Contact the appropriate association level and request the resources materials. Then review the resources in the packet and any guidance from local governments or health officials that may be relevant.

• **Step 2:** Apply these practices and shares the COVID-19 Prevention and Work Practice Controls with your employees. Please strictly enforce social distancing guidelines. If you hold an employees' meeting have everyone stand at least six feet apart and do not conduct the meeting with groups larger than 10.

• **Step 3:** Continuously ensure workers and subcontractors who are on the job site follow social distancing and other coronavirus infection prevention measures.

Contact HBACV EO Bob Morgan for additional information and materials.



New Updated Guidelines for HBACV Members, Real Estate Professionals Regarding COVID-19

The Home Builders Association of Virginia and the Virginia REALTORS® are strongly recommending that members refrain from holding “traditional” in-person open houses for the foreseeable future.

Instead, each is urging members to transition to “by-appointment only” tours of model homes and properties also asking that appointments be staggered to allow staff time to sanitize the home prior to the next scheduled tour. Our associations are also advising our members to implement extended sanitation procedures at the beginning and end of the business day. Virtual and/or video tours are also encouraged.

The Virginia Department of Health has also issued new guidance, [which can be found here](#).

While this may cause disruptions to your day-to-day business operations, given the severity of this emergency and your ability to proactively minimize the risk of transmission and community spread, these measures are prudent at this time.

Real estate professionals who conduct open house appointments, including builders who provide access to spec or model houses, are advised to follow best practices outlined in the VDH Guidelines on Open Houses, Model Homes and In-Office appointments.

If you do have in-person showings please follow these guidelines.

- 1. Limit interior access to no more than 10 persons and require social distancing protocols - the six-foot rule.**
- 2. Have all individuals who enter immediately wash their hands or use hand sanitizer**
- 3. Have lots of extra pens and allow each person who signs in to use one pen that they then keep (or you sanitize before another person uses).**
- 4. Ask people for their names and contact information that you write down or record on your electronic device**
- 5. Open all doors and turn on lights prior to the start of the open house so people can walk around without touching door knobs and light switches.**
- 6. Have paper towels near sinks if someone wants to turn a sink on/off**
- 7. Have individuals wash hands or use hand sanitizer upon leaving**

Remember, these are the minimum standards. Doing more, helps more.

10-POINT PLAN FOR BUILDING A SAFER JOB SITE

Hand hygiene

Wash with soap and water and sanitize when you can, especially after using common restrooms and when either entering or leaving a home site. Use the hand sanitizer provided in portable restrooms.

Stay off your face

The easiest way to catch germs is by touching your face, so train yourself not to.

Communicate

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your building partner's foreman

Sanitize as you go

If available, use sanitizers or other cleaning materials to keep your tools and your work product (countertops, sinks, faucets, wall and floor tiles) clean at least once per day. Do not leave the home until cleaning up after your work.

Keep your smartphone smart

You'd be surprised how many germs your phone accumulates; get in the practice of sanitizing it daily.



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Let it go

Until the Coronavirus is behind us, stay away from shaking hands, or doing fist & elbow bumps.

Be considerate

Help prevent the spread of germs: stay home if you are sick.

The CDC and your family physicians are the experts

There's so much information out there so be informed by visiting the [CDC website](#) for the very latest. If you believe that you may be symptomatic, please consult your primary care provider.

If it isn't business critical, use technology

Err on the side of caution. Communicate as much as you can by phone or e-mail, as opposed to face to face meetings in groups.

Prevent the panic

Rely on the above 9 steps, be informed, and please do your part to keep yourself and your work environment healthy and safe.

We will get through this together!