

## Our Covid-19 Response: What has Changed & What Hasn't

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In the current lock-down, the Construction Industry is an essential industry, and we are part of it. We can work. Not only do we need to fulfill our obligations to existing clients, but we can and should help those who call throughout the week asking us to make their homes more functional and enjoyable.

We're keeping up with requirements from Federal, State, and Local governments, the CDC, as well as our client's specific needs. "Wear masks, don't wear masks... absolutely wear masks!" Stay 3-feet apart, no 6-feet! Take a walk in a park... no don't go to parks! No gatherings of 100, wait, no 10...everyone work at home!" *Whew!*

At week 3 of this crisis, one of our employees uttered in frustration, "I don't want to hear about Covid-19 anymore!" I don't blame her - - it's been traumatic to see our community in such distress. Every time I've drafted this company response, it's been obsolete in a couple of days.

There wasn't a playbook to pull off the shelf for this pandemic. I've found we need to lean into our core principles, and sprinkle in some common sense. We're pulling together to keep our clients and employees safe. Here are the core values that inform our actions:

### **1 - Find a Way**

For current clients and project, we've customized our approach. For some, we pushed to finish quickly; for others, we've installed "sanitations stations" for workers at the jobsite. Despite ongoing challenges, we've managed to stay on schedule and on budget. This is because our team members are encouraged to "Find a Way" in close collaboration with our clients, trade partners, and others.

For new clients, for whom now is an ideal time to plan, we are using video calls for consultations and planning, making those interactions fun and inspiring.

### **2 - Follow the Law**

We've been diligent to follow the latest orders and CDC directives. Even though we are exempt from stay-at-home orders, we've encouraged designers to work from home. Our jobsite crews are sanitizing, keeping personnel to a minimum and reducing trips to the hardware stores. We are wearing gloves and masks when out in public.

### **3 - Be Kind**

We are professionals, but not just there to do a job. We look for ways to serve those around us - - whether that's picking up the newspaper, or helping to carry in groceries, we want to be helpful. We are thinking about all of you now and hope you are finding

your home a comfortable place to be. Don't hesitate to remember we are your friends too, and we are happy to help with anything. Every kind expression helps!

#### **4 - Practice Group Accountability**

We always work to help each other, and keep egos in check. Our team members hold each other accountable - - not by finger pointing, but through sincere care and support so we all can achieve high standards of performance.

#### **5 - Be Client-Focused**

Our design-build approach is highly customized for each client and project. We're working out ways to social distance, sanitize, and keep work moving forward efficiently. Close communication and patience all around support this core value. Our clients want their homes to be more functional and safe. Recently, one client had an immediate need to make their home office more secure and quiet so we're installing doors quickly to enclose that space for them.

#### **6 - See the Opportunities**

As we settle into our new way of working, we remain focused on finding any silver lining we can, and capturing improvements for the long-term.

### **Our Commitment**

We are here now and plan to be here when this is over because we choose to be. Our work and approach will change, in some good ways. We hope a quick recovery will be possible, but we're gearing up for the long haul...that's what we've always done.

We have promises to keep! We have grit. There are families and homes who need us.

As we reflect, our response is not just a list of things we will do...it's more... it's how we can be our best selves in this time.

Warmest regards,

*DANA KING*