

Advocating for your Livelihood

Particularly over the past couple of weeks, HB&RACC has been closely following the impacts of COVID-19 on the trades and building industry. Here are a few updates on proactive measures HB&RACC and HBRAMA have taken to protect your business and your livelihood.

- **Tracking operations of municipalities across Cape Cod.** As more and more municipalities close Town Halls to the public, HB&RACC confirmed and shared how Building Departments are operating, how they are issuing permits and how they are performing inspections. We will send out the latest updated information to you in the next few days.
- **Reaching out to all municipalities across Cape Cod advocating for maintaining services while keeping safety in mind.** On Friday, HB&RACC reached out directly to all Select Boards/Boards of Selectmen, Boards of Health, Health Agents, Building Departments, and Town Administrators/Managers, contacting over 130 town officials throughout the Cape. When reaching out, HB&RACC requested each municipality provide resources consistent with changes to the Open Meeting Law required for [regulatory boards/commissions/committees to meet remotely](#) and regularly. Despite Town Halls being closed to the public, HB&RACC requested permits be issued online and inspections take place while a building is unoccupied or through a virtual process, which includes a signed affidavit along with pictures to be submitted. We also stressed how job sites are currently consistent with new public health mandates issued by Governor Baker.
- **Governor Baker expresses his support to keep building industry operational during COVID-19 pandemic.** During a conversation with the Massachusetts Retail Lumber Association, Governor Baker said he does not support a statewide shut down of construction. He underscored the guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security where construction is identified as an essential business activity.
- **Professional license renewal extended 90 days after COVID-19 emergency.** Governor Baker issued an [executive order](#) enabling an extension of professional license renewals 90 days after the termination of the emergency declaration for professional licenses like CSL.
- **State issues guidance for Building Officials COVID-19.** For situations involving building inspections for purposes of achieving compliance with the state building code, Sections 110.3, R110.3, “the building official shall make the inspections within two business days after notification.” Should an inspector be dealing with restrictions from their employer, which impedes completing inspections as prescribed in the code, or have situations involving the property or other risky conditions related to COVID-19, the state building code does provide an alternative. The inspector has the authority to accept reports from an approved subject matter expert per building code sections 104.4 and R104.4. Utilizing subject matter experts, and the appropriateness as to the use of these provisions, in any situation, is at the inspector’s discretion.

