



March 25, 2020

Governor Philip B. Scott  
109 State St  
Montpelier, VT 05609

Re: Continued critical maintenance of golf courses during COVID-19

Dear Governor Scott:

On behalf of the Vermont Golf Course Superintendents Association— collectively representing nearly 60 golf courses in the state of Vermont – thank you for your leadership during this challenging, unprecedented time. COVID-19's effects have been far-reaching across all sectors of life.

In response to your Executive Order issued on March 24, we are writing to respectfully request clarification for golf course *maintenance* as an essential and critical business activity. Although golf courses in Vermont will have temporarily closed retail business operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, basic maintenance on the grounds cannot stop.

Maintaining our state's golf facilities during this critical period of potential business shut down is exactly that, a critical operation. Our golf courses provide enhanced community involvement including social opportunities, benefit our local economy, and are important locations for charitable endeavors. Approval to continue to maintain the most valuable asset of our business is essential.

Spring is a critical time for turfgrass and it cannot be neglected for extended periods. If turfgrass is lost, many courses may face permanent closure. Any halt or delay in maintenance now will only accelerate the potential for significant turf loss on golf courses statewide in the weeks and months ahead. Additionally, without timely maintenance, these large green spaces can quickly become overrun with weeds and invasive species that can compound illness with large amounts of pollen and weed seed being released into the environment.

Rest assured; the golf industry is taking aggressive steps to stop the transmission of COVID-19. CDC guided policies and best practices – such as social distancing, staggering of work schedules to reduce employee contact points, and increased sanitizing of all workspaces and bathrooms, to name just a few – have been implemented within our team's day-to-day operations. Golf course maintenance, by its

nature, is an outdoor activity performed by individuals working on their own, naturally keeping extensive distance from other workers and not interfacing with the general public.

We are all in this together. The golf course industry stands with your office and Vermont's public officials to contain COVID-19. We hope you will endorse our critical need to continue to perform these essential functions within our communities.

We look forward to your reply and invite your office to contact us at any time to clarify our concerns listed above.

Sincerely,

Larry Keefe, President

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