



## Rhode Island Golf Course Superintendents Association

March 24, 2020

Rhode Island State House  
Office of the Governor, Room 115  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Continued maintenance on golf courses during COVID-19

Dear Governor Raimondo and Lieutenant Governor McKee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Golf Course Superintendents Association representing over 48 golf courses in the Rhode Island, we would like to thank you for your leadership during this challenging, unprecedented time. COVID-19's effects have been far-reaching across all sectors of life.

We are writing to respectfully request that you continue to acknowledge and allow for golf course *maintenance* as an essential and critical business activity. 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, an essential operation for the continued health of our community properties and the current and future health of the golf industry in Rhode Island.

Spring is a critical time for turfgrass and it cannot be neglected for extended periods of time. 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 and turfgrass industries stand with your office and Rhode Island's public officials to contain COVID-19. We hope you will continue to endorse our critical need to continue to perform these essential functions within our communities.

Respectfully,

Rhode Island Golf Course Superintendents Association