



Recommended Business Practices for Heating Fuel Dealers During the Coronavirus Pandemic

It is absolutely imperative that your company takes immediate precautions to protect the health and safety of your employees and customers. NEFI recommends the following actions. **As always, please contact your company physician and legal counsel.**

Please note: the coronavirus is highly contagious; it has an incubation period of up to two weeks, during which individuals could be asymptomatic or experience only mild symptoms yet remain capable of spreading the virus. When an individual is symptomatic with a fever (100.4° or higher) or dry cough, the virus is even more likely to spread. In addition to implementing the recommended practices below, NEFI strongly recommends consulting the CDC website ([cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)) as well as a company physician and legal counsel.

Recommended Practices for Everyone

- Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and running water are unavailable, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Implement social distancing measures, including maintaining six feet of distance from colleagues, employees and customers whenever possible.
- Avoid contact with any individuals who are showing symptoms of the coronavirus, including fever, coughing and/or shortness of breath.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and dispose of it immediately.
- Communicate regularly with suppliers, employees and customers to keep them informed of any changes to your business.

Recommended Practices for Company-Customer Interactions

- Whenever possible rely on phone, text, email, teleconferencing, or other electronic communication methods to communicate with customers, instead of in-person conversations.
- If available, wear facemasks and gloves on all service calls. Follow established glove and mask protocols, including proper disposal.
- If your company offers online delivery/service requests and payments, encourage customers to pay their bills online and to call your office only in the event of a no-heat emergency or equipment shutdown.
- Fuel deliveries made to customers' homes present low risk factors. However, if possible, send delivery and service invoices by mail or switch to electronic invoicing instead of leaving invoices at the door.



- Avoid all direct contact with customers and maintain the maximum distance possible: at least six feet.
- On service calls, if the customer has separate access to their heating or air conditioning system, try to request in advance that they make the area available to you directly, e.g., opening bulkheads, cellar doors, etc.
- If the unit is a hot air or air conditioning system, try to avoid opening parts of the system through which air flows, including filters. Rather than installing filters, leave them for the customer to install.
- Before entering a customer's home, if anyone is present, ask if they or anyone in the household is sick in any way or experiencing symptoms, including fever, coughing and/or shortness of breath. If the customer answers in the affirmative, contact your employer for further instructions prior to entering.

Recommended Practices for Employer-Employee Interactions

- Follow the guidelines above for minimizing risk of exposure.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are touched frequently. These include desks, keyboards, office and mobile phones, doorknobs, faucet handles, vehicle door handles, steering wheels, etc.
- If possible, instruct delivery and service personnel to perform their duties without interacting in person with office staff. For example, electronically send work orders, delivery tickets and driver routes.
- Sick employees are a risk to others. CDC recommends home quarantine for 14 days.
- Allow employees to stay home to care for sick family members or for children if childcare is otherwise unavailable.
- Some companies are instituting a practice of taking employee temperatures before they enter the workplace and disallowing entry to anyone with a temperature of 100.4° or higher.
- Where possible, segment work teams into isolated smaller units so that an outbreak in one unit doesn't necessarily affect all.
- There are many rapidly changing laws and regulations related to sick time, paid leave and essential employees. Contact your state or local association as these differ dramatically depending on location and continue to change as the situation evolves.

For more information visit the NEFI Coronavirus Resource Page at www.nefi.com/coronavirus or contact NEFI at (617) 924-1000.