

**Contact:**

Brad Hurley ([bhurley@pasen.gov](mailto:bhurley@pasen.gov))

Carly Simpson ([csimpson@pasen.gov](mailto:csimpson@pasen.gov))

**Senator Yudichak announces COVID-19 Regional Code Enforcement Partnership in Luzerne County.**

**Nanticoke, April 6, 2020** - State Senator John Yudichak (I-Luzerne/Carbon), leaders from the Lower South Valley Council of Governments (LSVCOG) and Mountain Council of Governments (MCOG) announced today a COVID-19 Regional Code Enforcement Partnership to ensure companies still operating under Governor Wolf's life-sustaining protocols in Luzerne County are following state and federal COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.

Today's announcement follows Sunday's order from Pennsylvania Department of Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine, who evoked Pennsylvania's Disease Prevention and Control Law to require companies to maintain and clean buildings according to the Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control COVID-19 guidelines.

The measures outlined in the order are for owners of buildings of at least 50,000 square feet used for commercial, industrial or other enterprises, including but not limited to facilities for warehousing, manufacturing, commercial offices, airports, grocery stores, universities, colleges, government, hotels, and residential buildings with at least 50 units.

To view the full order go to:

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/gov-wolf-health-sec-signs-order-providing-building-safety-measures-to-combat-covid-19/>

The COVID-19 Regional Code Enforcement Partnership initiative's purpose is to Inform, Enforce and Report. The LSVCOG and the MCOG will build regional inspection teams from their member communities that will coordinate random inspections of businesses in our region's industrial parks. The COVID-19 Regional Code Enforcement will address the following:

- 1.) Inform companies they must implement COVID-19 Safety Guidelines and the guidelines from Pennsylvania Department of Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine's Building and Safety Measures order.
- 2.) Enforce all municipal code violations at company facilities.
- 3.) Report any COVID-19 violations to federal and state authorities and establish an email address to accept complaints regarding COVID-19 Safety violations.

A public email address and website will also be established to accept complaints and record concerns from both workers and the general public regarding enforcement of COVID-19 safety guidelines.



To submit any complaints or concerns go to:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GXRDYMK>

“The COVID-19 Regional Code Enforcement Partnership will ensure our region’s businesses are in full compliance with COVID-19 Safety Guidelines that are designed to protect their employees and the public during this public health crisis,” said Senator Yudichak. “Between Hazleton and Wilkes-Barre there are companies, under Governor Wolf’s order allowing essential businesses to continue operations that employ well over 20,000 workers in our regional industrial parks.

“It is imperative that we act quickly and effectively to marshal our regional resources to ensure these businesses are strictly following cleaning their facilities and protecting workers according to the Pennsylvania Disease Prevention and Control Law.”

“Just the other day I took a ride to one our bigger warehouses in Hanover Township and there had to be close to 600 cars in the parking lot. With the amount of people working at some of these facilities we have to make sure the COVID-19 safety guidelines are being followed,” said Sam Guesto, Hanover Township Manager and LSVCOG. “The Lower South Valley COG was happy to pitch in and help and our code enforcement officers are ready to get out there and start inspections.”

“COGs are formed to attack these types of problems with a collaborative effort. This partnership highlights exactly what COGs do well - bringing everyone’s collective resources together to deal with the problem,” said Dan Guydish, MCOG. “There has been a great deal of communication among everyone involved in this partnership and we’re going to do everything we can for the businesses still in operation, their employees and the residents of our communities.”

“Senator Yudichak has been in contact with us since last week about helping with this initiative and we already started enforcement,” said Jim Montone, Chairman, Hazle Township Supervisors. “We have to all work together and take a boots on the ground approach to this, which I think will make an immediate impact on our worker’s health and safety.”

“I think it’s great how our local leaders and Senator Yudichak are stepping up to help keep our workers safe, which in turn keeps the communities safe that they reside in,” said John Chura, Mayor of West Hazleton. “We need to make sure that best practices are being followed and that all directives and orders are being implemented.”

A letter explaining the code enforcement efforts was sent out to the businesses that fall under the DOH order on Wednesday, April 8. For more information on the COVID-19 Regional Code Enforcement