The COVID-19 outbreak presents unusual circumstances that require us to do whatever is necessary to further our mission. This fact sheet discusses simple things that you can do to keep yourself and others healthy and stop the spread of this virus. Treat everyone as though they are a COVID-19 carrier and every common surface as if it harbors the virus. Remember, one careless person can spread the virus to the whole work unit. It is our responsibility to keep our community and colleagues safe.

This safety guidance is intended to help DCNR staff responding to wildfires to minimize risk of exposure to infectious diseases.

General Behavior

- Continue to monitor and follow CDC and DCNR COVID-19 Safety Guidelines recommendations.
- Watch for COVID-19 symptoms in co-workers and yourself. Report concerns to your supervisor.
- Leaders should clearly express that staff must take personal responsibility to reduce their potential exposure to the virus.

General Preparedness

- Daily readiness activities (briefings, weather reports, staffing plans, ETC) should be done outdoors.
- Fire detection patrols should be done so staff remain isolated from other staff.
- Do not share PPE, radios, and other equipment.
- Disinfect vehicles and equipment after each response.
- Work with Bureau Press Office and local media to ask the public to refrain from any outdoor burning to reduce the risk of wildfire and COVID-19 risks associated with responding to it.

Response

- Emphasize the importance of a proactive response to keep fires small and prevent long-duration fires.
- Consider utilizing tactical aircraft on fires with growth potential or those threatening life and property.
- Consider radio briefings to maintain distancing.
- Implement strategies with low resource demand and high likelihood of success. Then work with volunteer fire departments to make excess needs available.
- Minimize the sharing of tools and equipment during a fire (i.e. leaf blower). If tools must be shared, sanitize them between users.
- Wear a face covering during a fire and when you enter your work site.
- Plan operations to reduce smoke exposure (e.g., significantly limit the time spent on mop-up).
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet or more on a fire when you feel it is safe to do so.

Please follow all the information provided to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. We will continue to do everything we can to keep our employees informed and safe. For additional information and to stay informed reference the Centers for Disease Control or the Pennsylvania Department of Health websites.