

Section 2 – PROJECT STATEMENT / SCOPE OF WORK

Covid Protocols

Health & Safety Protocol Working Group *Residential/Multifamily/Commercial/Industrial Installation Protocol*

❖ **Background:**

Throughout New England, many energy efficiency programs were forced to suspend field activities as restrictions were enacted by the Governors in each state to stop the spread of COVID-19. This document serves as a suggested guideline for the preservation of customer and worker health and safety while conducting field activities.

The protocols below detail the process performing water meter installations in residential, multifamily, commercial and industrial buildings. These activities would be permitted in interior spaces that would not be occupied during the installation, or on the outside of a building.

These measures include:

- Interior water meter installations
- Water meter surveys/audits including residential, multifamily, commercial and industrial locations
- In-situ water meter testing (commercial

Included is a section describing a non-contact method of moving forward to implement work that can safely proceed with such protocols in place.

Supplemental training materials will also be available to those who wish to train existing staff on these protocols. It is envisioned that each Project Manager will develop and include associated content specific to their respective project, layering in the compliance monitoring process and any follow-up processes required.

❖ **Objectives:**

- Define interim field activities that can take place in interior spaces that would not be occupied during the installation, or on the outside of a building.
- Develop new protocols to define the work scope for these projects, inclusive of any amended procedures and supplemental health & safety protocols.
- Train workers and management teams on new procedures.
- Implement measures.
- Monitor compliance with new protocols.

❖ **Prerequisites:**

1) Customer

- a) Must be informed of and accept the following process.
- b) Must be able to participate in a review of a work scope.
- c) Must participate in a Contractor's remote pre-screening to identify any conditions that would prevent installation.
 - i) Includes: building layout, health and safety barriers (i.e. mold-like substance, potential asbestos containing material, knob & tube wiring, etc.), obstructions that would inhibit safe access to fixtures, requirement to access space through areas that will be occupied during the installation

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- ii) Prescreening minimizes need for any direct interaction with the customer or access to occupied spaces of the building on the day of installation.
- d) Must be available to monitor interior conditions during the upgrade visit to alert Contractor personnel to unforeseen impacts on the retrofitted space.
 - i) Customer must be informed of the time it will take to complete the installation and that they will be required to monitor conditions for the duration of the work.

2) Building

- a) Must have access for entry into the work areas with limited/minimal contact from inhabitants.
- b) Must have access to rest room facilities and/or exterior spickets for flushing
- c) For interior installations:
 - i) Must be separated completely from any space that will be occupied during the installation.
 - ii) Must be free of health and safety barriers (i.e. mold-like substance, potential asbestos containing material, etc.), or obstructions that would inhibit safe access to water meter.
- d) For exterior installations:
 - i) Must have direct access to the fixtures being replaced.

3) Contractor (Installation/Inspection)

- a) Must participate in a remote COVID-19 health & safety protocol training conducted by industry professionals and abide by all protocols set forth.
 - i) All crew members must also be trained in and abide by the same protocols
- b) Must provide workers with all required personal protective equipment (PPE) for the specific job requirement (**See Table 1**) and require them to use it as directed at all times while on the work site.
- c) Must be able to travel legally, adhering to current rules governing crossing state lines.
 - i) If taking public transportation, adhere to local or state guidance regarding required PPE for public transportation. Upon arrival, travel PPE should be removed, disinfected and stored, or placed in contractor's disposal receptacle designated for PPE.
 - ii) If traveling with team members in a single vehicle, the vehicle must be disinfected before occupancy. A minimum of gloves and cloth masks should be worn and the spacing between occupants should be as much as comfortably possible. Surface disinfectants may be used as frequently as the occupants wish. Outdoor air ventilation should be maintained as much as comfort allows.
- d) It is recommended that workers not have any physical conditions that would place them at a higher risk for contracting COVID-19, including, but not limited to: (A healthcare provider's evaluation should be the determining factor when questions arise.)
 - i) Greater than 65 years of age
 - ii) Body mass index (BMI) greater than 40
 - iii) Serious lung conditions (e.g., asthma, severe pulmonary allergies, occupational lung diseases, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD], etc.)
 - iv) Type I Diabetes
 - v) Poorly controlled hypertension
 - vi) Chronic kidney disease
 - vii) Severe cardiac conditions (e.g., arrhythmias, congestive failure, etc.)
 - viii) Any autoimmune disease (e.g., lupus)
 - ix) Treatment with immunosuppressive medications

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- x) Treatments for cancer (i.e., chemotherapy or radiation)
- xi) Any condition known to cause impaired immunity
- e) Workers must be cleared by their own organization's occupational health service to wear any sort of PPE, especially respirators.
- f) Employees who are feeling ill should not report to work.

❖ Training, Initiatives, & Monitoring:

- 1) Mandatory Health & Safety Protocol Training
 - a) All personnel resuming field activities must participate in a mandatory health & safety protocol training.
 - b) Specifications for acceptable PPE for work activities will be distributed to project groups ahead of time depending on meter size and work type. Examples of items to be specified are:
 - i) Tyvek® suits or similar coveralls
 - ii) Reasonably tight-fitting rubber-like gloves (e.g., Nitrile®)
 - iii) Utility gloves to be worn over tight-fitting gloves (to prevent damage to underlying gloves)
 - iv) Respirator masks equivalent to N95 protection or better
 - v) Face shields
 - c) Specifications for virucidal disinfectants will be based on the EPA's list of disinfectants registered as being effective against emerging environmental pathogens.
- 2) Initiatives
 - a) Thielsch/WMS takes vital initiatives to encourage employees to undergo vaccination.
 - i) Currently, 70% of WMS Employees have undergone vaccination for COVID-19.
 - ii) As the vaccine becomes widely available, flexibility is garnered to all employees to encourage vaccination.
- 3) Monitoring
 - a) Strict adherence to health & safety protocols must always be maintained.
 - b) Compliance will be monitored by a QA team designated by the Program in which the work takes place.
 - c) Donning (putting on equipment) and doffing (taking off equipment) will be based on the following:
 - i) Sequence of steps for donning and doffing must be followed in strict order to prevent self-infection.
 - ii) Steps will include repeated use of disinfectants, touching only specified surfaces on PPE, final personal disinfection, and disposal.
 - d) Training and observation by QA team will include:
 - i) the donning, doffing, and disposal of PPE
 - ii) the replacement of damaged PPE in the field
 - iii) the appropriate use of disinfectants in the field (e.g., on potentially contaminated housing material and equipment used, during PPE changes
 - iv) the observation of appropriate physical distancing in the field based on level of PPE worn

❖ Finalization of Interim Measure Work Scope

- 1) Determine whether the site qualifies for the implementation of health and safety-augmented interior and/or exterior efficiency retrofit based on the prerequisites above.
 - a) If the project is not a good fit for the interim measure work scope, the customer is contacted and informed of options for resuming participation in the program at a later date (blue sky).

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- b) If the project is a good fit for the interim measure work scope, the next step is taken to continue the process.
- 2) Technical Pre-screening:
 - a) Optional pre-installation confirmation of existing state is scheduled if required by the program prior to assignment of work orders (or by a contractor after receipt of a work order, if on-site confirmation of the opportunity is desired).
 - b) Worker arrives on site and:
 - i) Utilizes proper PPE as required
 - PPE Level 1** when alone and not entering the building
 - PPE Level 2** when alone and entering the building
 - PPE Level 3** when not alone
 - ii) Communicates with designated customer representative to walk through the installation process
 - iii) Completes interior and exterior audit data collection as necessary
 - iii) Completes a site assessment to ensure site conditions meet the prerequisites for the install to proceed
 - (1) The normal operations within the building will not be ongoing while the install is in progress
 - (2) Adequate provisions exist for the delivery and temporary storage of equipment without impinging on spaces that are occupied
 - (3) Access to valves and appurtenances does not require walking through occupied spaces
 - iv) Confirms that the site is free of health and safety barriers (i.e. mold-like substance, potential asbestos containing material, knob & tube wiring, etc.), or obstructions that would inhibit safe access to fixtures,
 - v) Leaves site
 - vi) Work scope is completed offsite and confirmed with the customer. Order is prepared/assigned as necessary.
 - c) Interim measure installation is scheduled with the customer.

Interim Measure Protocols:

1) General Onsite Health & Safety

- a) Levels (1-3) of PPE used are listed in Table 1. (Level 3 being the most protective.)

Table 1 Personal Protective Equipment Levels and Appropriate Physical Distancing			
Required PPE	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Long Pants	X	X	X
Close toed shoes	X	X	X
Cloth Mask or Dust Mask	X	X	
Tight-fitting Gloves	X	X	X
Utility Gloves over tight-Fitting Gloves		X	X
Tyvek® or other Coveralls		X	X
N95 Mask or Equivalent or Greater Protection			X
Face Shield or Safety Glasses			X
Minimum Physical Distance between workers if wearing similar PPE. Worker wearing lowest level PPE determines minimum physical distance	6 feet	4 feet	2 feet

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Table 2 Personal Protective Equipment Level Required According to Task			
Task	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Traveling together, Technical Pre-screening (single worker performing a walkaround, not entering building)	X		
Technical Pre-screening (single worker performing a walkaround and/or entering unconditioned, unoccupied areas in a building)		X	
Delivery and removal of materials to and from the site (unoccupied areas in a building)		X	
Performing measure upgrades			X
In-process inspection (PPE compliance monitoring)			X
Post Inspection (Single worker performing a walkaround and/or entering unconditioned, unoccupied areas in a building)		X	

- b) PPE level for **emergency entry** is determined by the type of space entered, and the nature of the emergency:
 - i) Training will include contingency plans for worker protection while responding to breach, including replacement of worker’s PPE.
 - iii) Unforeseen emergency support crews will be subject to the same PPE requirements as the assigned crew.
- c) COVID-19 protocols must be strictly adhered to at all times in order to protect the health of workers and customers
- d) Arrival of workers at site:
 - i) If taking public transportation, adhere to local or state guidance regarding required PPE for public transportation.
 - ii) Upon arrival, travel PPE should be removed, disinfected and stored, or placed in contractor’s disposal receptacle designated for PPE.
 - iii) If traveling with team members in a single vehicle, the vehicle must be disinfected before occupancy. A minimum of gloves and cloth masks should be worn and the spacing between occupants should be as much as comfortably possible. Surface disinfectants may be used as frequently as the occupants wish. Outdoor air ventilation should be maintained as much as comfort allows.
- e) Proper PPE must be donned prior to approaching any other worker or the customer.
- f) Six-foot advisory physical distance between workers can be decreased with proper use of PPE. **(See Table 1).**
 - i) As noted in the table, limit of proximity will be determined by level of PPE being worn by both parties. As recommended by the CDC, the 6-foot advisory physical distance should be maintained whenever possible.
- e) All workspaces must be sanitized with a disinfectant that appears on the EPA's list of disinfectants registered as being effective against emerging environmental pathogens.
- g) Workers must remove PPE according to strict adherence with the COVID-19 protocols and remove PPE from site in closed bags or receptacles designated for the purpose.

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- h) Workers must depart the site according to the following requirements:
 - i) If taking public transportation, adhere to local or state guidance regarding required PPE for public transportation. Upon arrival at destination, travel PPE should be removed, disinfected and stored, or placed in disposal receptacle designated for PPE.
 - ii) If traveling with team members in a single vehicle, the vehicle must be disinfected before occupancy. A minimum of gloves and cloth masks should be worn and the spacing between occupants should be as much as comfortably possible. Surface disinfectants may be used as frequently as the occupants wish. Outdoor air ventilation should be maintained as much as comfort allows. Upon arrival at destination, travel PPE should be removed, disinfected and stored, or placed in disposal receptacle designated for used PPE.

2) Measure Installation Workflow

- a) To the extent that is practicable:
 - i) the size of the crew at a job site should be limited to a number that will allow the workers to maintain the 6-foot advisory physical distance during the installation
 - ii) the same crew should be used from start to finish on a project to minimize the number of different employees who work at the site
 - iii) Only one trade/subcontractor at a time shall be working on a jobsite and 6-foot separation social distancing should be maintained for each member of that trade. If more than one trade/subcontractor must be on the job to complete the job, then at a minimum all trades and subcontractors must maintain social distancing policies in accordance with this guidance.
- b) Prior to the beginning of site activity each day, a designated supervisor/lead crew member shall conduct a safety stand-down meeting to review site conditions, the planned work scope, and any special considerations. At that time, each employee will be required to self-certify to their supervisor that he/she:
 - i) Has no signs of a fever or a measured temperature above 100.3 degrees or greater, a cough or trouble breathing within the past 24 hours.
 - ii) Has not had “close contact” with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. “Close contact” means living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, being within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 for about 15 minutes, or coming in direct contact with secretions (e.g., sharing utensils, being coughed on) from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, while that person was symptomatic.
 - iii) Has not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official.
- c) When delivering and arranging temporary storage of materials to the site:
 - i) Minimize interactions when delivering or picking up materials from the site
 - ii) Organize the material placement so as to minimize movement on the work site
 - iii) Ensure that any materials left on a job site at the end of each work shift are securely stored to prevent access to it
 - iv) Remove all unused materials and waste generated by the installation from the job site by the end of last day of site work, or as early as practicable following the completion of the installation
- d) Covid-safe work practices to be followed during the course of the installation for all projects

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- i) Identify choke points where workers are forced to stand together, such as hallways, hoists and elevators, ingress and egress points, break areas, and buses, and put in place policies to maintain social distancing
- ii) Make disinfectants available to workers on the job site and ensure that the supplies are replenished as necessary
- iii) Periodically sanitize surfaces that come in contact with workers during installation as work is performed in the area and again upon completion of the project. Particular attention should be paid to cleaning points of high contact, including door handles, switches, elevator buttons, machines, rest room fixtures, desk tops and stair rails
- iv) Tools, equipment, and ladders used by workers should also be sanitized during the work period and at the end of each day's work.
- v) Limit the need for face-to-face contact with Customer staff at the site. When such discussions are necessary, maintain appropriate social distancing
- vi) Job site break times should be staggered to prevent congregating of employees in spaces where appropriate social distancing cannot be maintained. Crews should be encouraged to bring their own food and beverages from home to minimize external contamination, and sharing is not permitted
- vii) Soap and running water shall be abundantly provided on all warehouse sites for frequent handwashing. Workers should be encouraged to leave their workstations to wash their hands regularly, before and after going to the bathroom, before and after eating and after coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose.
- e) Upon project completion, follow standard Program site cleanup practices.
- f) Disinfect the work area and equipment and tools as described in *Training and Monitoring* Section (1c).
- g) Remove PPE and dispose of safely following COVID-19 protocols described in the training.
- h) Prepare documentation (electronic and paper) of meter specifics, noting any differences from the "as-contracted" conditions.
- i) Prepare paper notice of completion and email it to the customer for signature.
- j) Workers depart the site.