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May 15, 2020

Welcome to the PSATS Morning News, our new email digest.

Missed yesterday's PSATS Morning News? No problem! A [PSATS Morning News Library](#) is available online for your viewing pleasure!

We're excited about this new concept and want to hear what you think. Email comments and suggestions to morningnews@psats.org.

Latest News

[13 Counties Move to Yellow Phase Today, More to be Announced](#)

Today marks another step forward in reopening Pennsylvania. Most counties in the southwest and some in the southcentral regions of the commonwealth will move to "yellow" status effective today. This includes Allegheny, Armstrong, Bedford, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Fayette, Fulton, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington, and Westmoreland counties. This is in addition to the 24 northcentral and northwest counties that moved into the yellow phase last Friday.

Today, at 2 pm, Gov. Tom Wolf is expected to announce another dozen counties that will move into the yellow phase effective Friday, May 22. A few counties have stated that they will move ahead with reopening without state authorization, while others backed off previously announced plans when Wolf threatened to withhold discretionary CARES Act funding.

Watch for a PSATS Yellow Alert around 1:30 pm today for a list of the latest counties slated for release from the red zones. [Read full story.](#)

[Department of Agriculture Outlines Restaurant Enforcement Actions](#)

The state Department of Agriculture outlined enforcement actions that would be taken against restaurants offering dine-in services to patrons in violation of the commonwealth's business closure order. Restaurants in both red and yellow phase counties are limited to take-out and delivery options and prohibited from offering dine-in service. Food safety inspectors will follow up on reports of violations and if confirmed, actions will include a warning letter; follow-up inspection; if still in violation, adjudication to suspend the retail food license; if the business continues to operate after license suspension, citations will be filed with the magisterial district judge; and the department may pursue civil penalties of up to \$10,000 per day. Complaints about food safety concerns or restaurants offering dine-in services can be made [here](#).

Trump Announces Plans to Rebuild National Stockpile

At a visit yesterday in Upper Macungie Township, Lehigh County, President Donald Trump discussed his plans to rebuild the strategic national stockpile, which has been used extensively during the COVID-19 crisis. Trump will sign an executive order to provide financing to key industries to produce vital goods and services and provide a more independent, domestic supply chain, including production of more personal protective equipment.

[CVS Now Offering Drive-thru Testing for COVID-19](#)

Today, CVS will begin offering self-testing for COVID-19 at select sites. Self-swab tests will be available at several CVS locations throughout the state for anyone who has symptoms. Advance registration is required, and testing will take place at the drive-thru. [Click here](#) for more information.

[GRANT OPPORTUNITY: NATaT Releases Rural Grant Guide](#)

The National Association of Towns and Townships has released an updated Rural Grant Guide for local governments. The guide identifies potential funding opportunities to support community development, broadband, water and wastewater projects, and more in rural communities. The guide focuses on federal grant opportunities that typically reoccur. The guide is a valuable resource for townships in rural areas looking for grant and loan resources. [Click here](#) to access the guide.



The House and Senate are in recess at the call of the chair. Both chambers are scheduled to return to session on Monday May 18th.

House Concurs on Legislation to Reopen Real Estate Activities; Legal Services

On May 14th, the House passed HB 2412 on concurrence of Senate amendments. This legislation would require the secretary of the state Department of Community and Economic Development to immediately issue a waiver to the Governor's COVID-19 Business Closure Order for all real estate related activities and legal services that can adhere to social distancing practices and other mitigation measures defined by the Centers for Disease Control to protect workers and mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Additionally, and until the proclamation of disaster emergency issued by the Governor on March 6, 2020 and any renewal of the state of disaster emergency, is terminated or expires the following would apply: (1) a municipality or municipal authority that requires a use and occupancy certificate, or any other similar certificate or certification as a condition of a property transfer, shall be presumed to have issued a full and unconditional permit without requiring an inspection of the property. (2) taxing authorities and public utilities would be required to provide alternative means for residential home buyers or title insurers to determine the current status of tax payments or overdue utility obligations.

These restrictions would be contrary to the permit tolling regulations recently enacted in Act 15 of 2020. As such, PSATS will request Governor Wolf veto this legislation once it is on his desk.

House Passes Legislation to Open Certain Business

On May 14th, the House passed HB 2388. This legislation would require the state Department of Community and Economic Development to issue a waiver to the business closure order for the following businesses: vehicle dealerships, lawn and garden centers, cosmetology, salon, and barber shops, messenger services, animal grooming services, and manufacturing operations. HB 2388 would require these businesses to comply with CDC and state Department of Health safety and health guidelines. HB 2388 has passed the House and the Senate and will be presented to the Governor.

House Passes Legislation to allow counties to create reopening plan; regulatory tolling; COVID-19 task force

On May 14th, The House passed SB 327 on concurrence of Senate amendments. SB 327 would provide county governments the option to develop and implement individual plans to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and safely reopen. CDC and state Department of Health employee safety guidelines would remain in effect. This legislation would also require any regulation not finally approved or disapproved to be suspended in place until 90 days after the emergency order is lifted. Finally, SB 327 would create a COVID-19 cost and recovery task force. SB 327 has passed the House and the Senate and will be presented to the Governor.

Temporary Outdoor Restaurant Seating Legislation Before House

HB 2506 which would allow food establishments to create temporary outdoor seating areas in parking lots or areas adjacent to the establishment is currently before the House.

PSATS is opposed to this legislation as it ignores the importance of, and does not require adherence to local ordinances. We are working with the bill's sponsor, Representative Everett, on an amendment to this legislation to require compliance with local zoning regulations as a matter of public safety.

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Learn

[Flagger Training - Virtual Class - May 22, 2020](#)

This instructor-led, virtual class, flagger training will be conducted for individuals who have flagging responsibilities on ANY ROAD OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. Others who would benefit from this course include: utility companies working on low volume roads, law enforcement personnel, municipal managers and elected officials (to understand the importance, and for budgeting purposes). This course has been designed to meet the PennDOT Publication 408 flagger training requirements mandated for all flaggers in Pennsylvania. [Click here](#) to register.



For full list of webinars and classes please visit <https://learn.psats.org>.



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