As more states limit the size of gatherings and even consider shelter-in-place policies in response to COVID-19, AFPM is working to see that refineries and petrochemical facilities — which are considered critical infrastructure by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) — don't face disruptions due to employees not being able to access their work sites.

To that end, AFPM President and CEO Chet Thompson issued a letter to all 50 state governors urging them to follow the critical designation guidance recently provided by DHS, which notes that workers in critical infrastructure industries "have a special responsibility to maintain [their] normal work schedule," especially at this time.

The fuel and petrochemical industries supply products and materials that are absolutely critical in the fight against COVID-19, including the components of health care and hygiene products, food packaging, and transportation fuel. These facilities — which are following strict COVID-19 mitigation protocols — must be able to operate. First responders and health care providers, other critical infrastructure, and the U.S. economy depend on them.

At this point, there have been no reported issues of essential employees not gaining access to critical infrastructure sites, including in states with shelter-in-place orders, but we recognize the importance of clear, proactive policy communication at this time. Explicit instructions from states clarifying that critical infrastructure will remain accessible to essential employees will limit the potential for operational disruptions in the weeks to come.

Read AFPM's full letter to the 50 state governors here.

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