

# ALASKA VPP NEWSLETTER

## April 2020



Good Day VPP Safety Coordinators!

Let me begin by saying I hope everyone is doing their best to stay healthy and safe. With the spread of the Coronavirus outbreak, I completely scrapped my initial April newsletter. COVID-19 has impacted the entire world introducing new terminology such as, “social distancing,” and “new normal.”

If you haven't heard, OSHA recently published a March 2020 COVID-19 guideline entitled, “Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19.” You can access it through our AKOSH link at: [https://labor.alaska.gov/lss/training/Preparing\\_Workplace\\_for\\_COVID19.pdf](https://labor.alaska.gov/lss/training/Preparing_Workplace_for_COVID19.pdf). There's good information that discusses steps employers can take to reduce workers' risks of the virus and how employers can protect workers.

During these troubling and unprecedented times, it's extremely important to take care of our mental health. I recently read an article that talked about employees who may be dealing with anxiety, depression, or mood disorders during this time. As employers, it is important that we make sure our work environment is as stress-free as possible. Here are a few suggestions that I recommend.

- Try to create a welcoming and supportive work environment for employees.
- Be transparent about the company's time-off policies and encourage employees to take the necessary time off to decompress, relax, or handle personal needs.
- Check with employees to see how they are doing and ask if they need your assistance.
- Offer mental health resources such as group contacts, community meetings, publications, or web links that employees can utilize should they have questions.
- Remember, it is never okay to single out an employee or force people to discuss private health concerns.

### NEWS:

The annual VPP Summit that was scheduled May 12-14, 2020 in Boise, Idaho has been cancelled due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Rather than rescheduling the event for later in the year, the VPP board moved it to next year, May 18-20, 2021. The conference will be held in Kennewick, Washington at the Three Rivers Convention Center. For more information contact Max VanValey at 253-313-8261.

### NOTEWORTHY:

Congratulations to Alaska Clean Seas on receiving their 5 year renewal into VPP!!! Effective dates are November 4, 2019 – November 4, 2024.

### CLOSING:

For VPP questions, call Angelo Romano, at 907-782-5413 or e-mail at: [Angelo.Romano@alaska.gov](mailto:Angelo.Romano@alaska.gov). Access our AKOSH webpage at: <https://labor.alaska.gov/lss/oshhome.htm>

Stay safe everyone and COVID-free.



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