



COVID-19 UPDATE



Issue 3 - April 22, 2020

This Week in COVID-19 News

As the attention of policymakers increasingly turns to reopening and supporting the American economy, the National Mining Association (NMA) remains actively engaged with the White House and multiple branches of government to ensure that mining's interests are considered. The effort includes public communications regarding the essential nature of mining, safety actions taken by our members and contributions being made by NMA member companies. Plus we have updates on both the crisis and its impact on energy and mining markets.

SAFETY SHARE: Coronavirus disinfection actions have led to a spike in calls to state and local [poison control centers](#).

Reopening America's Economy

[NMA President and CEO Rich Nolan on April 15, 2020, participated](#) in the first meeting of the [White House's Great American Economic Revival Industry Groups](#), joining top business executives from all sectors of the economy in discussions with President Donald Trump and his advisers on steps necessary for the next period of economic recovery.

“We will continue to advise the President on sound policies that will improve the demand for the products of mining such as a strong economic recovery policy, infrastructure investments and the need for improved industrial electricity demand,” said Nolan. “We also discussed the need to improve cash flows through further tax relief, regularity flexibility and permit reforms.”

NMA’s participation in the discussions was reported by a [variety of news media](#), and Rich Nolan and members of the NMA briefed reporters from outlets including the Associated Press, the Wall Street Journal, NBC News, Politico and Reuters.

CARES Act Increases

The [Senate on Tuesday passed the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act](#), with House action planned for Thursday.

[The legislation](#) provides \$310 billion for the [Paycheck Protection Program](#), with a set aside of \$60 billion for small institution lending; \$50 billion for [Economic Injury Disaster Loan Emergency Lending](#); \$10 billion for [Economic Injury Disaster Loan Advance Payments](#), which are the \$10,000 advance payments for applicants; \$75 billion for hospital reimbursements through the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund, which is the mechanism used in the CARES Act; and \$25 billion for coronavirus testing to a wide variety of federal agencies with \$11 billion of that amount made available to states.

As a reminder, the U.S. Treasury periodically releases updated Frequently Asked Questions for the Paycheck Protection Program that can be found [here](#).

Focus on Recovery

Regulatory developments important to the economic recovery continue to roll out in agency actions not directly related to COVID-19, as well. The past week saw major developments in several of these matters that are favorable to mining, including:

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) publication of the long-awaited [Mercury and Air Toxics Standards \(MATS\)](#) revised Supplemental Finding and Residual Risk and Technology Review final rule.

- EPA’s publication of the [Navigable Waters Protection Rule](#) that will replace the 2015 Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule later this summer.
- The U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission’s denial of rehearing requests [on PJM’s Minimum Offer Price Rule \(MOPR\)](#) order.
- EPA’s publication of a new [mining sector snapshot](#) that provides the public with a platform to increase understanding of the environmental performance and economic contributions of the metal and coal mining sectors.

NMA and Third-Party Voices

The NMA and its third-parties continue to place editorials across the country on the importance of our industry to the country and economy.

Rich Nolan’s op-ed positioning our industry as central to the economic recovery was picked up by the [Greeley Tribune](#) (CO).

On the third-party front, there was a new hit in the [Washington Examiner](#) with an op-ed from Mark Perry, scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, in which he argues investing in copper infrastructure is worth the cost because it can save lives by killing germs. And Matthew Kandrach’s op-ed on the antimicrobial properties of copper and other minerals continues to get play from outlets including the [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#) (PA), [Buffalo News](#) (NY) and the [Clermont Sun](#) (OH) .

U.S. Virus Response Update

The Trump administration released “[Guidelines, Opening Up America Again,](#)” an overview of a phased approach for the economy to be followed by individuals and employers.

U.S. Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management [published a memo](#) directing federal agencies to “ramp back up government operations to the maximum extent possible, as local conditions warrant.”

The Washington Post published “White House readies push to [slash regulations](#) as major

part of its coronavirus economic recovery plan.”

CNN and **The Hill** each published state-by-state rundowns of reopening plans.

elmpact has easy to visualize daily updates of coronavirus cases [by county and hot spots](#).

U.S. House of Representatives moved to change its rules to allow members to [vote remotely](#) during the coronavirus pandemic. House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-23) wrote to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12) urging her to establish a “clear, safe, and effective plan for [reopening Congress](#).”

Congressional Budget Office scored the cost of the initial CARES Act at [\\$1.8 trillion](#).

Energy and Mining COVID-19 Impact News

The Mine Safety and Health Administration has updated its [Mine Safety At A Glance 2019 mining industry statistics for coal, metal-nonmetal and mining as a whole](#). The data show relative stability for metal-nonmetal mining, but a drop in coal employment and number of mines. [April BLS Current Employment Statistics](#) data show a small decrease in mining employment (excluding oil & gas) in February and March of this year.

Gold and silver prices [were down Tuesday in reaction to the drop in crude oil demand and prices](#), but amid the COVID-19 crisis and prospect of possible recession, [some analysts assume, like previous recessions, gold is likely to rally again to new record highs in the near term](#).

Financial analyst Jefferies said investor interest in mining stocks [is growing](#).

U.S. Surface Transportation Board reported weekly coal train loadings [fell to an over six-year low](#). U.S. Department of Energy announced plans to provide up to [\\$18 million for basic research](#) aimed at helping to ensure the continued availability of rare earth elements or effective substitutes.

NMA COVID-19 Resources

The NMA is maintaining a comprehensive suite of online resources for [Coronavirus Assistance and Response](#). Resources include both [health, safety and business assistance](#) for NMA members and a chronicle of the American [mining industry's response to the current crisis](#).

Telling Member Stories

The NMA team also continues to share stories of our [members doing their part](#) for the communities in which they live and work by providing financial assistance, educational tools and personal protective equipment for coronavirus response teams. NMA's *Count on Coal* and *Minerals Make Life* websites and social media also featured [member company actions](#).

Tell Us About Your COVID-19 Response

NMA is continually working to gather information about how the COVID-19 crisis is affecting our members. Information will be used in discussions with policymakers and decision makers at all levels of government and will help illustrate how mining is giving back to the communities where we live and work.

Please [contact Ashley Burke](#) with on-going accounts of your responses to the global pandemic.