



PGA
Wisconsin Section

GCOW
Golf Course Owners of Wisconsin



Wisconsin Chapter
GCSAA
Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

March 23, 2020

Governor Tony Evers
115 East, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers,

As a follow-up to our letter dated March 19, we wanted to provide the following update in light of today's announcement of the safer-at-home order for Wisconsin.

Attached is a letter by national industry partners, fully supported by this group, asking that golf courses maintenance be classified as an essential service as has been done in other states, including Pennsylvania.

We also request clarification on whether public golf courses or privately owned golf courses are allowed to remain open for play as they are similar in nature to state parks, which remain open. In some states, such as New Jersey and Pennsylvania, all courses have been closed. In other states, such as Delaware, Kentucky, and parts of California, courses have been allowed to stay open as outdoor recreational space. Those that choose to stay open are practicing safety guidelines in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and the State Department of Health Services. Social distancing, increased time between starting times, sanitizing any common areas, removal of items on the course such as benches, ball washers and bunker rakes are just a few of the things being done.

Thank you again for your attention, Governor Evers. We continue to wish you all the best as you exercise judgment and wisdom to both protect and advance our communities.

Respectfully,

Rob Jansen, Wisconsin State Golf Association Executive Director
Joe Stadler, Wisconsin PGA Section Executive Director
Jeff Schwister, Golf Course Owners of Wisconsin Executive Director
Brett Grams, Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association Chapter Manager



PGA



GCSAA
GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



March 23, 2020

Governor Tony Evers
115 East, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers,

On behalf of the Wisconsin golf industry and the nearly 500 golf courses in the state, we stand ready to do our part as local communities, states and the nation continue to respond to the Novel Coronavirus outbreak. We know that you have and will continue to be called upon to make difficult decisions in response to this crisis and we recognize that public safety is paramount.

The golf industry is recommending that in certain cases when it becomes necessary to close the outdoor golf courses to the public during the pandemic, golf course maintenance must be allowed to proceed during the shutdown. An average golf course of 150 acres is a living ecosystem requiring continued maintenance. Spring is a critical time for turfgrass, and it cannot be neglected for an extended period or it will be lost, and the community will lose a vital asset. In addition, performing required maintenance will deter crime and vandalism that could occur at an unmonitored property while also deterring pests, such as mosquitoes or ticks, which can quickly multiply in unmanaged areas of land causing a further public health threat.

We are taking all necessary steps to keep maintenance staff safe by considering the health advisories and recommendations by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Practices such as social distancing, staggering staff work hours, mandatory glove wearing and sanitizing of hand tools are just some of the maintenance adjustments that the golf industry is proactively instituting. Golf courses provide many recreational, environmental and economic benefits to the communities they serve, and continuing to maintain them during these unprecedented times will ensure they will be here when the crisis has ended.

Governor Evers, thank you for your attention to this important matter. We wish you all the best as you exercise judgment and wisdom to both protect and advance our communities.

Respectfully yours,

Jay Monahan, Commissioner, PGA TOUR

Jay Karen, Chief Executive Officer, CGOAA

Seth Waugh, Chief Executive Officer, PGA of America

Rhett Evans, Chief Executive Officer, CGSAA

Jeff Morgan, Chief Executive Officer, CMAA

Mike Whan, Commissioner, LPGA



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115 East, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers,

On behalf of the Wisconsin golf industry and the nearly 500 golf courses in our state, we stand ready to do our part as local communities, states and the nation continue to respond to the COVID-19 Coronavirus outbreak. We recognize the difficult task the Governor's office has in simultaneously keeping the economy going and keeping our citizens safe.

As your office continues to respond to the evolving situation, we understand the necessary mandatory closures of indoor gathering places (such as restaurants, bars, gyms, etc.). We will certainly play our part. But we also want to be sure there is an understanding of the unique nature of the golf course business.

The clubhouse, pro shop and/or restaurant operation is just one small part of the footprint of a golf course. We believe the fields of play, which typically represent 100-200 acres of open space land, should continue to be treated differently. The opportunity for socially-distant recreation on a golf course is much like taking a walk through one of our wonderful state parks. Golf course operators all over America have been taking extra precautions to ensure playing 9 or 18 holes of golf is a safe experience that comports with all health advisories and recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. They are adjusting the food and beverage operations to comply with all suggested and mandated restrictions, such as limiting all business to take-out food service.

If there is to be a mandate to close businesses around the state to avoid the gathering of people and the interaction with surfaces, we respectfully point you to the State of Michigan, where Governor Whitmer recently mandated the closure of many types of businesses, but allowed golf courses to keep the fields of play open. In that light, we ask that you similarly do not include the fields of play per se in any such mandates.

Much in our state is tied to the game and business of golf. Keeping the golf course business alive directly impacts the success and sustainability of many great companies, organizations and events in Wisconsin.

Thank you for your attention, Governor Evers. We wish you all the best as you exercise judgment and wisdom to both protect and advance our communities.

Respectfully,

Rob Jansen, Wisconsin State Golf Association Executive Director
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