



April 9, 2020

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Re: Re-Roofing as an Essential Service in Ontario

Dear Ministers:

Since 1964 the Ontario Industrial Roofing Contractors Association (OIRCA) has been the voice of the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) roofing industry in Ontario. Our Association is a group of professional union and non-union roofing contractors, roofing product manufacturers and suppliers and building science consultants. Our mission is to assure through accountability excellence in roofing construction.

We are aware of the Government of Ontario's priority to take necessary actions and measures to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus and our Association applauds your efforts. On April 3, 2020 you updated your list of essential businesses and services that may stay open during this crisis.

Your list of construction services detailed in articles 27 through 31 is very specific about which types of construction projects are deemed essential. The list is clear, and our industry understands where and when they can work on those types of projects. Article 20 addresses maintenance and repairs which is a very large component of our members' work.

Reroofing of buildings is often considered necessary (i.e. essential) maintenance and repair work and in this case one would assume that these types of projects may continue as well. When repairs or reroofing are planned, roofs are often at the end of their life and there is a high risk of water infiltration into the building. Of course, if a roof leaks, on any building, that facility for safety and sanitary reasons, may need to be reroofed. Mould, corrosion and electrical problems are common byproducts of a leaky roof and pose a health and safety risk to the occupants.

A significant element of the ICI roofing industry is its reliance on good weather. Now that spring has arrived the industry is ramping up plans to tackle these compromised buildings. Many of these facilities are essential to their particular sector whether it be, for example, education, government, manufacturing or retail. Once the crisis is over these buildings need to be safe for the occupants to return.

Unlike new construction sites, the reroofing of existing buildings is much less riskier from a COVID-19 perspective. Roofing crews are small and not restricted to confined spaces. Reroofing work often does not require access to the interior of the building resulting in less potential contact with occupants. Our members follow MLTSD guidelines utilizing proper COVID-19 job site procedures.

While the elimination of the COVID-19 virus is your number one priority, our Association is sensitive to the economic impact caused by the pandemic and, like you, hope for a rapid recovery of trade and industry activity. Members of the OIRCA account for roughly 70% of the ICI roofing work in the province. They are a major economic driver of the construction industry in Ontario.

OIRCA applauds the performance of the government in this crisis so far. The decisive measures taken by your government at the early stages of this crisis will save lives in the weeks and months ahead. We hope that you recognize that the reroofing of buildings is an essential construction service that ensures the health and safety of the people that occupy them.

Yours sincerely,
ONTARIO INDUSTRIAL ROOFING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

Don Marks
Executive Director
cc.

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