

Energy Farm Social Distancing Procedure During COVID-19 Restrictions

In order to carry out research determined to be essential under the Office of Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation guidelines (<https://research.illinois.edu/mitigating-impact-covid-19-research-enterprise>), these new procedures to incorporate social distancing have been developed. The privilege of working on the farm is contingent on strict adherence to safety guidelines and to prioritizing not only your personal safety but the health and safety of others.

- Log your daily visit to the Energy Farm to allow for timely communication if the need arises.
<https://forms.illinois.edu/sec/9454091>
- Transportation to and around field site: One person per vehicle, including utility vehicles. Exception can be made if two people are sharing a residence. Disinfecting wipes will be provided to wipe down controls, steering wheel etc at the end of each day or between users during the day. If possible, maintain consistent driver/vehicle pairing to minimize cross-contamination.
- Main Office / Commons Areas in main building : Use of the main office and commons area will be restricted to individuals with an on-site offices. All other work should take place outside the building and the building should only be entered if there is an emergency. If exceptions need to be requested, please contact Energy Farm staff.
- Portajohns will be setup and cleaned daily for researchers needing facilities. Similarly, bring water jugs and lunch/snacks from home due to restrictions on main building access.
- All hand tools borrowed must be checked out, and returned sanitized. Coordinate with Energy Farm staff these needs. For basic tools, researchers should have their own and follow their procedures for sanitation. Tool cage items can continue to be checked out, but must be wiped down with sanitizer when returning.
- Allow adequate time to reduce physical exertion during jobs. Instead of using the building for shade or an air-conditioned break, tent(s) will be set up to work under. Work areas must be cleaned with disinfectant wipes at the end of the day or between users. Use of vehicles for breaks may be necessary for air conditioning.
- Severe weather: The storm shelter does not have adequate space to maintain minimum social distancing for the number of people anticipated to be working at the farm. Follow forecasts conservatively and head home at first / any signs of inclement weather.
 - Rain / lightning / wind: Personal vehicles are an acceptable place to wait out the weather unless it shows potential to become severe.
 - Tornado warning / straight line wind potential: Delay field research or return home if currently in field. In case of tornado watch, use abundant caution if you must work and leave the Energy Farm at first sign of increased risk of severe weather.
- Separation during work in field: maintain a minimum of 6' separation when working in a field location. If possible, minimize the number of workers in a location at one time.
- Farm implements (e.g. transplanter etc) that cannot provide the minimum separation will be limited to a single rider / operator. Exception can be made if two people are sharing a residence.
- Working alone policy: Call and check in / out with an off-site colleague.
- Safety training: Online training will continue to be the primary delivery method for introductory training. Hands-on training will need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for alternative delivery if social distancing is not possible. Please communicate these needs with adequate lead time so a plan can be developed to address them.

Safety and PPE has never been more important-- a visit to the hospital due to an accident could potentially expose you to additional avoidable exposure.

These procedures are subject to evaluation and amendment as necessary to protect the health and safety of personnel. Please contact Tim Mies (217-649-3160) or Trace Elliott (217-530-2047) if you have questions regarding these procedures or any other safety concerns.

RESPONSE TO REPORTED CASE BY PERSONS WORKING AT THE FARM

- WORK WILL BE DISCONTINUED IN AREAS IDENTIFIED UNTIL DISENFECTING HAS OCCURRED AND STAFF DETERMINE SAFE TO RETURN
- CONTACT LIST WILL BE USED TO COMMUNICATE WITH RESEARCHERS WORKING IN THE SAME AREA
- EMAIL WILL BE SENT OUT TO ENERGY FARM LIST INDICATING THE AREA OF CONCERN AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY CAMPUS

USEFUL RESOURCES / LINKS

- [COVID-19 campus resources](#)
- [OVCR, 3/13/2020: Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on the research enterprise](#)
- [Follow current directives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(e.g., face coverings\). The CDC is constantly updating guidelines, so check often.](#)