WHY IS THE CONSTRUCTION/LANDSCAPING BAN STILL IN PLACE ON NANTUCKET?

MARCH 27, 2020

Nantucket & the 6 Vineyard towns have sent a letter to the Governor requesting that the Islands be exempted from the provisions of the State Stay at Home Order designating construction and landscaping as essential services. While we are awaiting a response, the Town's position (as expressed by the Select Board at its 3/25/20) is that the Town's Order(s) stand. In the event that the Governor either does not approve the request and/or does not respond, we are prepared to activate Board of Health statutory authority (MGL c. 111, sec. 6) to maintain the Town's Emergency Orders.

Nantucket Cottage Hospital is actively monitoring the situation and is concerned about the potential for a spike in cases within the next two weeks. With the first 5 cases of Coronavirus on Nantucket now confirmed, it is suspected that there are more undiagnosed cases out there. NCH advises that now is the most critical time to enforce the town's shelter in place order and the construction ban, and is in full support of these measures. This is a full-blown public health and safety emergency that requires extraordinary measures. COVID-19 is extremely contagious – workers in industries like construction and landscaping tend to share tools, equipment, materials, go on errands together, go to and from work together – all opportunities for spread of the virus. Even when people say "we won't do that" the risk is too great – people have simply not had time to make the recommended measures, a habit. The Select Board and the Emergency Response Team are committed to reviewing any relief from the orders when it is safe to do so - at the same time we cannot afford to lose any gains that we have made/are making.