Pandemic Impacts MFPA

We are 10 days in to Missouri gradually opening back up for business. May 4 was the official launch date for reopening, as it was for many “flyover” states, and now we are waiting on the economic response. We are all hopeful that we do not experience a new spike in COVID-19 cases and the economy moves toward “pre-pandemic” levels over the coming months. The impact of the pandemic on our industry is far and wide, and obviously varies dramatically depending on your particular industry sector. It still seems to me that our country, and what we have always assumed as “normal”, may be forever changed because of the Coronavirus, and it makes me mad and sad. However, we are tough and resilient, and we will prevail.

MFPA’s Executive Committee has voted to accept my recommendation of cancelling the 2020 Summer Meeting. I really appreciate everyone who took the time to respond to the survey that we sent out regarding the Summer Meeting. I think that 2020 will be the first time in our history that we have not had an annual membership meeting during the summer. We have made this decision for all the obvious reasons, but it was still difficult. We are currently working on alternative ways to conduct MFPA board and committee meetings.

MFPA’s political action fund is a primary benefactor of the Summer Meeting. The annual raffle and auction raise about $5000 for the PAC and we must continue fundraising even though the meeting has been cancelled. Staff is working to develop an on-line auction of items that we hope to get donated to the PAC as we normally do every year. Unfortunately, the fun associated with a live auction is another casualty of the pandemic, but the fundraising will continue as normal. In the coming weeks we will be soliciting auction items and the actual on-line auction will occur in late July.

The MFPA Logging School was set to begin June 15, 2020 in Salem, which has been another tough decision on whether to move forward with the school considering the pandemic. Considering all the issues that were associated with coordinating a formal education program while trying to meet the health and safety requirements of the pandemic, I decided to recommend cancelling the school as it was originally developed. However, we are working to offer the 5 students that committed to the school an alternative that we hope will be acceptable to them. Our Education Manager, Mark McCarthy, will be seeking out MFPA logging members who might be interested in offering a 3 month “internship” to one of the 5 logging students. MFPA will cost share the internship with the logging company and we will also have the student PTH trained before joining the logging crew. We are hopeful that the internship will provide the student with real world experience and further their interest in the profession. Please contact Mark directly if you have an interest in hiring an intern and he can provide you with details.

MFPA will continue to distribute information regarding all things Coronavirus and please do not hesitate to call for help on anything.

Brian Brookshire, Executive Director
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Recently the Missouri Master Logger Certifying Board met to discuss the latest group of recertification applicants. One of the comments I heard repeatedly throughout the discussions was this is the kind of work we expect from our Master Loggers, and we are getting it. Originally requested as a way to recognize those loggers going above and beyond the call of duty, Master Loggers are held to a strict set of performance standards that place them among the best loggers in the state.

There are seven areas of responsibility that a Certified Master Logger must agree to uphold:
- Abide by water quality and soil retention standards
- Comply with acceptable forest management practices
- Commit to safety
- Participate in ongoing training regimen
- Comply with all state and federal regulations
- Use sound business management principles
- Document harvest operations planning

Master Logger Certification relies on a field assessment process to clearly document a logger’s knowledge, skills, and harvesting practices using a set of 68 performance standards. If their work passes these tests, applicants sign a code of ethics, and their application goes to an eight-member certifying board for consideration.

Status as a Master Logger provides a few benefits….one of them being extra points for the MDC Best Bid system. Another major benefit is the public relations value of being able to tell potential customers that you are Master Logger. More than one Master Logger has told me they think a lot of their jobs are being given to them because of the Master Logger status. Master Loggers must recertify every two years. Currently we have 25 Missouri Master Loggers…with more to come. If you would like more information on how you can become a Master Logger…contact the MFPA Office (573) 634-3252. Or e-mail mark@moforest.org

What’s the difference between a Master Logger, and most loggers in the state? Mostly it’s the desire to participate in this volunteer program, and a willingness to be judged and held to a higher standard. In fact, most Missouri loggers ARE doing it right…they just need to be recognized. It all starts with completing PTH training and staying current on your Continuing Education credits.

On another subject…Due to circumstances way out of our control, we have been forced to delay the MFPA Logging School. We are working on another program that may be more beneficial to the industry. I will provide more information soon on this exciting opportunity for the entire industry.
MFPA TURNS 50!

For 50 years, MFPA has served as the collective voice for Missouri’s 9 billion dollar forest products industry. Membership includes primary processors (ie sawmills), secondary processors (ie cooperage, pallets, flooring, ties), loggers, landowners and forest industry equipment/service companies.

On January 29, 1970 the first Annual Meeting was held in Rolla, MO to form a statewide association of wood-using industries in Missouri to provide a voice for the industry and secondly, to address the problem of what action is necessary to inform the Air Conservation people of workable pollution controls within the industry. Sixty-one persons were present representing 46 firms and four public agencies. The closing line of the minutes of this first meeting reads, “We must plan our own destiny.”
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Salem, MO is hosting a “Salute to the Timber Industry Parade and Timber Fun Day” to be celebrated on Labor Day September 2. Parade will showcase the timber industry and its relative business. The Parade begins at the Commons on Hwy 72 with line up starting at 8:00 AM. The parade will start at 10:30 AM. Following the parade a Timber Fun Day will be held at the Commons from 12:00 to 5:00. Free hamburgers, hot dogs, and bratwurst will be provided by Vandivort Drug in celebration of 40 years in business. The activities include fun games for children, hands on activities such as shingle splitting, rail splitting, crosscut sawing and exhibits for viewing.

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Kiln Drying Hardwood Lumber Webinar Series

A FREE 4-Week Series on Kiln Drying Hardwood Lumber will benefit both new and experienced operators. Join the “Wood Doctor” Gene Wengert!

Week 1
Measuring Moisture Content During Drying; Weighing & Moisture Meters. How to measure the MC of the lumber during drying as well as how to use the MC readings to run a kiln. How many samples, using a microwave oven for drying moisture sections, sample end coating, sample locations in the kiln, moisture pins and much more...

Week 2
Safe Dry Wood Storage; Control of the Dry-Wood Powderpost Beetle. Discussion on the objectives of good storage and the risks of poor storage and simple methods to control humidity.

Week 3
Using Moisture Content to Control the Drying Process (Kiln Schedule). How does temperature, humidity and velocity affect drying at different MCs.

Week 4
Causes and Cures for Drying Defects such as warp, checking, honeycomb, drying stress, case hardening, variable final MC, end checks, stain and more...

Register for the Free Webinar at https://event.webinarjam.com/register/1/oxqpksw
Latest Federal Guidance - Paycheck Protection Program

The federal government has issued updates to guidance in an area important to the hardwood industry: The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for ongoing facility operations.

*Paycheck Protection Program*

The IRS has issued clarifying guidance regarding the PPP. Questions have been raised recently about changing rules regarding this program, particularly around eligibility. According to the latest guidance, businesses with Paycheck Protection Program loans exceeding $2m can return the money without legal action if the Trump administration determines the aid wasn't necessary.

In addition:

If SBA deems the loan not needed even though the borrower certified otherwise, the money can be given back without having the case referred to other agencies for legal or administrative action.

Borrowers with a loan of less than $2m will be automatically deemed to have certified it was necessary in good faith because loans that small means they are generally less likely to have access to adequate sources of liquidity.

Please go to the following website for the Small Business Administration information and guidance, https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Paycheck-Protection-Program-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf
Ask about MFPA Rebates!

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