
NORTH AMERICAN HARDWARE AND PAINT ASSOCIATION ENCOURAGES INCLUSION OF ESSENTIAL HOME IMPROVEMENT SUPPLY WORKERS IN VACCINE PLANS

INDIANAPOLIS—Nearly one year ago, our communities began to feel the full and devastating impact of COVID-19. Shortly thereafter, we began hearing about the hundreds of thousands of essential workers who, regardless of threat to their own personal safety, continued to perform their duties to ensure that our society remained up and running.

The ranks of these individuals included our healthcare workers, police officers, firefighters and EMTs. The debt of gratitude we owe these brave heroes is immeasurable. In addition to these heroes though, there were thousands of other essential workers supporting critical services required to keep our societies functioning—the maintenance teams, truck drivers, warehouse workers and retail employees who kept vital products and supplies flowing to our businesses and households.

When communities across North America were looking at which services and industries needed to be deemed “essential” during the pandemic, we were proud and privileged that home improvement suppliers were among those so honored.

Governments, communities and individuals all recognized that home improvement retailers provide the products and services needed to keep our homes safe, secure and functioning. This is a particularly important duty when so many individuals are spending unprecedented amounts of time in their homes.

Now that we may be emerging from the darkness of this pandemic and vaccines may offer us a new light at the end of this long tunnel, the North American Hardware and Paint Association (NHPA) asks that communities across North America support those essential workers in the home improvement industry that have risen to the challenge during this difficult time.

Together with other leading industry organizations representing the 45,000+ independently owned hardware stores, home centers, lumberyards and paint stores across North America, we ask that the essential employees supplying and running these stores be given the same priority as other essential service providers in receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. These essential employees include the retail store employees as well as those involved in the distribution and logistics of home improvement supplies.

We are not asking that these essential workers be moved in front of any vulnerable members of our population, healthcare workers or emergency responders. We are simply asking that they be included at the same priority level as other essential workers providing support to the infrastructure of our communities such as grocery and food service workers.

Maintaining, repairing, sanitizing and preserving our homes, particularly during these challenging times, is not only essential but it is also critical to the health and well-being of our population. Our ability to do this would not be possible without the men and women in the home improvement supply chain. From the warehouse workers and truck drivers moving supplies through the channel, to the workers in the retail stores, they are all critical links in the chain that keeps our communities up and running.

So with that, NHPA simply asks that these essential workers be placed in the same vaccine availability category as other critical essential employees in similar service sectors.

Sincerely,



Robert Cutter
President and CEO
NHPA



Dan Starr
President and CEO
Do it Best Corp.



Boyden Moore
President and CEO
Orgill, Inc.



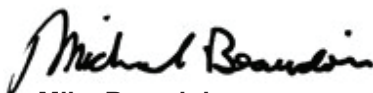
John Venhuizen
President and CEO
Ace Hardware Co.



David Christmas
President and CEO
Distribution America



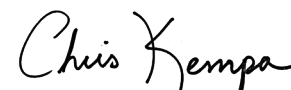
Steve Synnott
President and CEO
PRO Group



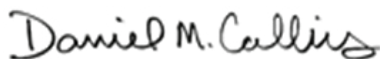
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