

Connect with Other Shops

The Zoom Mech XChange and BS Sessions have proven to be a popular way for members to connect with each other. The sessions have been informative and inspiring, with members sharing their experiences and advice for dealing with the multitude of changes and challenges that have come their way during this crisis. At members' request, follow-up programs have been scheduled as follows:

Collision members, attend the [BS Session](#) (*press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window*) on May 6th.

Mechanical members, attend the [Mech XChange](#) (*press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window*) on May 7th.

Both programs are scheduled from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

MN Legislative Update

AASP-MN lobbyist, Sam Richie, reports as follows:

There are just two weeks left in the 2020 Legislative Session. The Constitutional deadline for adjournment is Monday, May 18. The Constitution provides that the Legislature may not pass legislation on the final day of the Session. In other words, nothing can pass after midnight on Sunday, May 17.

The Governor and the Legislature are staring at a huge hole in the State Budget. Income tax and sales tax revenues have fallen at an unprecedented rate. Everything that they might do to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic will be shaped by a report that will be presented next Tuesday, May 5, which will report on just how severe the budget shortfall may be.

Governor Walz has requested that the State Economist and the financial consulting firm who conducts and presents budget forecasts for the state prepare an interim report to take into account what has happened to state revenues over the past seven weeks.

The Governor and the Legislature will not be considering any kind of a Supplement Appropriations Bill. We are certain to have hiring freezes and significant layoffs at the state and local government level. The earlier those difficult decisions are made, the bigger the impact will be on budget savings in the face of revenue decline.

We expect a mad scramble in the final two weeks of Session as Legislators and the Governor respond to next Tuesday's interim forecast and deal with the reality of the State Budget shortfall.

MN Stay-at-Home Order Extended

On April 30th, Governor Walz announced an extension of the stay-at-home order until May 18, 2020 with an easing of some restrictions on customer-facing businesses. The new order allows any customer-facing retail business that sells goods to engage in curbside or outside pick-up and delivery, as long as customers do not enter the business premises. [Click here for guidance](#) (*press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window*) on what the latest executive order means for your business.

New MN Website for Testing Sites

Gov. Tim Walz has unveiled a new website where Minnesotans can [find a COVID-19 testing site](#) (*press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window*) near them.

The site includes a map that features 127 different clinics and health care facilities that offer the tests. The website is one of only a handful in the country and will be continuously updated as more clinics develop the ability to test patients.

MN DEED Survey

The Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development (DEED) is surveying employers to provide input on new social distancing norms and practices. These norms are being developed with the goal of keeping Minnesotans safe and healthy while enabling more social and economic activity. The survey can be completed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Minnesota-Social-Distancing>. (*Press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window.*)

Hennepin County's Small Business Relief Program

Hennepin County's Small Business Relief Program opened on April 27th. The program offers emergency forgivable loans of up to \$7,500 for qualifying businesses impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19). Applications are due noon Friday, May 8th.

Loans can be used to pay for critical operating expenses, such as:

- Utilities
- Rent payments
- Mortgage payments
- Payments to suppliers
- Other necessary expenses

View more info and apply at: <https://www.hennepin.us/economic-development/programs/Emergency-relief>. (*Press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window.*)

EIDL & PPP Updates

The federally-backed forgivable loan program known as the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) is reportedly exhausted of funds already, just days after Congress approved an additional \$320 billion for the program. Created by the CARES Act, the PPP is designed to help small businesses maintain payroll and other operational expenses during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Newsday has reported that the Small Business Administration is no longer accepting new Economic Injury Disaster Loan applications, citing that a backlog of previous applications could exhaust the additional money authorized by Congress. Best to check with your lender...

Congress Begins Next Phase of COVID Response

House Democrats are shaping a next phase of COVID-19 relief that could rival the size of the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act but sharp division lines with Republican lawmakers are still being negotiated. Democratic priorities in the next package include more aid for cash-strapped cities and states, more financial support for individual Americans and small businesses, money for election security and additional funds for health providers and hospitals.

EEOC News

Workplace poster

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) announced an increase in the penalty for failure to post the EEOC notice from \$559 to \$569 per violation, effective March 18, 2020.

The EEOC enforces laws that prohibit workplace discrimination.

Employers subject to various laws enforced by the EEOC should ensure that they have the appropriate EEOC notice posted in their workplaces. The EEOC poster, “*Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law*” is available in four languages (English, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese) and can be obtained by downloading and printing it via [EEOC website](#). ***(Press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window.)***

Testing

On April 23, 2020, the EEOC added additional guidance to its COVID-19 Q&A's. The EEOC clarified that an employer may mandate a medical test for COVID-19 as long as the testing is (1) job related and (2) consistent with business necessity.

Employers may choose to administer COVID-19 testing to employees before the employees enter the workplace to determine if those employees have the virus. Employers must ensure the tests are accurate and reliable (employers may review FDA guidance on safe and accurate testing). Employers must also keep any test results confidential and comply with ADA requirements.

The Q & A can be found here:

https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/wysk/wysk_ada_rehabilitaion_act_coronavirus.cfm. ***(Press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window.)***

I-CAR Industry Relief Program

In light of the COVID-19 downturn, I-CAR is offering a number of free and discounted training options as part of its Industry Relief Program, including:

- Free production management courses
- Free Repairability Technical Support (RTS) access
- Free course - “Using Vehicle Maker Repair Procedures”
- Discounted ADAS packages

Additional information about how to access these resources can be found here:

https://aaspm.memberclicks.net/assets/documents/I-CAR_SupportingEvery.pdf. ***(Press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window.)***

SCRS Webinar Available On Demand

On April 28th, the Society of Collision Repair Specialists hosted a webinar, “How Professional Restorers Deal with ‘Disinfecting’ Vehicles”. The program featured professional restorers experienced in restoration, decontamination and infectious disease control. Participants were informed that vocabulary is “critical,” and businesses who claim that they’re sanitizing or disinfecting could be making a false claim. Instead, the presenters suggested that a shop tell its customer that they’re washing the vehicle and applying a disinfectant. Various strategies for eliminating the presence of coronavirus, including the use of high heat, UV light, oxidizers, foggers and steam cleaning, were also discussed.

The webinar can be found here: <https://scrs.com/scrs-webinar-ask-the-experts-how-professional-restorers-deal-with-disinfecting-vehicles/>. *(Press Ctrl key and click to open in a new window.)*

Keep Yourself & Your Employees Safe

AASP-MN member Arcon Solutions has these masks in stock and can ship them to you the next day. Place your order today by calling 952-882-6069.



Online Training Available

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, many companies are relying on webinars and other online classes to conduct training. Take advantage of these quarantine-friendly options.

Check out the training & events [calendar](#) on the AASP-MN website for information on some of those offered this month. Stay safe, healthy and informed!

Note: This content and analysis is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. Please consult your legal and financial advisors for detailed information before taking any action.