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We are using our resources to bring you special coverage of the Coronavirus.

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LIVE Daily, times TBA

PA Department of Health provides a live update on the Coronavirus. Secretary Dr. Levine & Governor Wolf



LIVE M-F, 12 & 8 PM

30-minute update on how the novel Coronavirus is impacting various aspects of life in Pennsylvania



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April 9, 2020

New York Times
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Washington Post
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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
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CNBC
[Jeff Bezos makes surprise visit to Amazon warehouse and Whole Foods store amid worker safety concerns](#)

Republican state lawmakers have made a big push to jettison Gov. Tom Wolf's system for deciding which businesses can be open during the coronavirus pandemic. In a vote that went along party lines, the Republican-dominated House Appropriations Committee approved a measure that would replace the **Wolf administration's list of life-sustaining/non-life-sustaining businesses** with less-restrictive **guidance from the federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency**.

There are some differences between the two sets of guidelines. For example, on Wolf's list, "residential building construction" is prohibited. But under the federal guidance, residential construction work is considered essential "to ensure additional units can be made available to combat the nation's existing housing supply shortage." Real estate agents also would be considered essential under the federal guidelines.

State Rep. Dawn Keefer, a York County Republican who pushed for the change to CISA guidelines, said "people are desperate" in many Pennsylvania business segments because of ongoing, forced closures that have no set end date. Wolf's waiver-request process that recently ended, Keefer said, was arbitrary and political. "All of our bordering states are selling cars, either by appointment or online. And the same thing with real estate," Keefer said. "Why is it not OK for somebody to put a deck on the back of their house?"

MIT Technology Review

[Why the coronavirus lockdown is making the internet stronger than ever](#)

Associated Press
[Working At Home Tests Network Morning Shows](#)

New York Times
[The Humble Phone Call Has Made a Comeback](#)

Bloomberg
[The Politics of 2020 Are Looking Less Ominous for Tech](#)

Spotlight PA
[Pennsylvania facing up to \\$4 billion shortfall as coronavirus shutdown upends state budget](#)

Harrisburg Patriot-News
[With Bernie Sanders dropping out, Pa. Democrats signal a reconciliation of liberal and moderate factions](#)

Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine, the administration's point person in fighting the pandemic in Pennsylvania, argued against a switch to federal business-closure guidance during the pandemic. The federal guidance, she said, would let businesses in nearly all industries make arguments that they be allowed to reopen. "There is no doubt that this legislation would lead to more Pennsylvanians infected with COVID-19, as it undermines the integrity and effectiveness of the Commonwealth's collective response to this novel coronavirus," Levine wrote in a letter to lawmakers. "Encouraging increased social movement of Pennsylvanians at this time by reopening a significant amount of businesses would be reckless and irresponsible."

Asked about the Republican push for the change, a spokeswoman for Wolf said in an email, "The governor is as eager as anyone to see Pennsylvanians headed back to work, but irresponsibly going against the direction of the Secretary of Health and reopening businesses too early will only extend the length of the economic hardships created by the pandemic." The House committee approved the federal CISA-related measure Tuesday afternoon.

To become law, it would need approval in the full House, followed by a vote of approval in the Senate and Wolf's signature. An override of a Wolf veto would require a two-thirds majority vote in each chamber. It's likely the full House won't take up the issue until next week, in part because of holidays that include the start of Passover on Wednesday and the upcoming Easter weekend. State Sen. Lisa Boscola, a Northampton County Democrat, wondered if House Republicans and Wolf might find a middle ground in which Republicans drop their push for a new system if Wolf agrees to add certain industries to his "life-sustaining" list. Boscola said she believed home builders should be in business, and she also questioned why golf courses can't be open when anglers can fish.

Tony Iannelli, president and CEO of the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, said the chamber hasn't taken a position on the CISA-related legislation, but said there was "no doubt" some businesses that are closed now should be allowed to reopen immediately. Those, he said, include road construction, home construction and construction in general. "That is a lot of jobs, and people who are anxious to get back to work," Iannelli said. At the same time, he said, public health must be a top priority. "It is a very tough balance between the physical health of our community and the economic health of Pennsylvania," he said. "How long do you wait before you decimate the economic health of the state?"

State Rep. Maureen Madden, a Monroe County Democrat, said she stood by Wolf's system on business closures during the crisis. "I don't believe we should be usurping the governor's authority," she said. Madden acknowledged there are "glaring discrepancies and inequities in the waiver process" and that "there should be more transparency."

Wolf, a Democrat, **[issued his original order to shut down](#)** "non-life-sustaining" businesses on March 19. Republican Appropriations Committee Chairman Rep. Stan Saylor said on Tuesday that Wolf's action came without consulting the Legislature, produced confusion and helped lead to huge numbers of unemployment claims.

– **Allentown Morning Call**; **[more from Spotlight PA](#)**

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven, once again and in a big way, the value of local TV news. Ratings are up, trust is up. Audience engagement is through the roof, as TV personalities literally welcome audiences into their homes. Even their cats are becoming stars.

At the same time, ad revenues are down, while station executives are working overtime to keep their widely dispersed staffs safe and operations humming. So, is the present time, while TV news is both outperforming and overstressed, really the time to focus on the future of emergency news with NextGen TV? As one news thought leader told me, it's the best of times and the worst of times to be talking about NextGen TV. News teams are focused like never before on new ways to cover emergencies, but they're also preoccupied with just getting out the news on a 24-hour cycle.

Timely or not, we know a crisis is a terrible thing to waste. The pandemic — overwhelming but moving at a slower pace than a tornado or wildfire — combined with the imminent launch of NextGen TV, creates a unique window to talk about the future. Fortunately for the TV industry, NextGen is about taking what you're already doing well now and elevating it to a whole new level. It's about cementing your leadership in local news for years to come. It's about building strength on strength.

A recent survey indicates that news professionals are beginning to understand the opportunity. In a series of webinars that the [AWARN Alliance](#) produced last summer for TV news professionals — attended by nearly 200 people — we polled the audience on this question: "Is ATSC 3.0 a game-changer for TV news?" An amazing 96% answered "yes." When TV news pros learn about NextGen, they get it. There also is a broader dimension beyond covering the news: NextGen and AWARN may be the key to getting ATSC 3.0 receiver chips in smartphones and connected cars, which would unlock enormous economic value for broadcasters. Improving public safety by improving alerting is a powerful argument for extending the reach of TV stations beyond fixed TV sets.

What would NextGen emergency news and information look like? It starts with geo-targeting existing newsroom workflow, aggregating it with content from public sources and distributing the feed or stream through hybrid networks. Broadcast and digital news and weather, public websites, and other ready sources may be bundled and offered to consumers in a dashboard user experience (UX). The service may be automated or semi-automated and transmitted both over-the-air with ATSC 3.0 and over the web. Consumers might see a small icon on their TV or mobile screens telling them that new geo-targeted emergency information is available to them if they choose to select it.

Information like weather updates, flood levels, road closures, shelter locations, news conferences with emergency authorities, access to closed neighborhoods or photos of missing persons would be made available at consumers' fingertips. In the case of COVID-19, it might be notification that a new person within, say, five miles of where you live has tested positive for the infection. Major news stations might use the feed as a bridge when they choose to end live, wall-to-wall coverage of an event and return to regular programming. It may serve as a source of localized news for their D2 channels that also can funnel viewers to the news channel.

Public stations that do not provide regular news coverage have expressed interest in taking emergency feeds from news stations or creating their own automated feeds as a geo-targeted lifeline for their

viewers. Through an upcoming pilot project and regional (virtual) meetings, we will continue our engagement with news professionals to develop UX templates and model workflows for launching NextGen emergency alerting and news. We also have started parallel discussions with leading emergency managers to gather their ideas about working with their local broadcasters to use the platform. Then we will bring them all together to build model templates that can guide local stations for their own NextGen TV emergency news deployments.

Creating best practices and shaping the future of emergency news and information with NextGen TV can only be accomplished with a united industry behind us. We are proud of support from our current members in the U.S., South Korea and Japan. But many broadcasters large and small, including major networks, TV set manufacturers and B2B players are sitting on the sidelines. We urge our potential industry partners — broadcasters and consumer electronics — to look up from the urgent business of managing the pandemic today and help the AWARN Alliance build new tools for the inevitable crises of the future.

In his management classic, *Good to Great*, Dr. Jim Collins shared a key finding from his research: great companies don't assign their best people to their biggest problems, they assign them to their biggest opportunities. Successful coverage of the pandemic combined with the emerging technology of NextGen TV creates an immense opportunity for local TV to secure its place in an interconnected but vulnerable world. – **TVNewsCheck**

Stay safe



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