**[Government Official’s Name]**
[Address line]
[State, ZIP Code]

**Subject: Essential Business Classification**

Dear [Recipients Name],

I am the President and Chairman of the Board of the National Air Duct Cleaners Association (NADCA). NADCA represents more than 1,300 small and large businesses and more than 3,000 certified technicians from across the United States and internationally, who perform a highly skilled and particularly essential service to healthcare facilities, commercial buildings, military facilities and homes.

Our members routinely provide service to maintain continuity of operations of the federal critical infrastructure sectors, as outlined at <https://www.cisa.gov/identifying-critical-infrastructure-during-covid-19>.

Our members perform source removal of contaminants from ductwork and clean and apply antimicrobial to HVAC systems and components where appropriate. Our members’ services are needed now more than ever as we work together with our facility partners to ensure a safe indoor environment for those businesses who are responsible for keeping our country and our citizens operational during these challenging times.

On March 18th, Chamber of Commerce CEO Tom Donohue offered guidance to [President Trump](https://thehill.com/people/donald-trump), recommending the government designate “essential businesses and services” during the coronavirus outbreak.

While states are calling for quarantine orders and business closures, businesses and services that support the infrastructure needed to combat the coronavirus must not be harmed, Donohue wrote in a letter to Trump.

In spite of this request, the administration has held off on clearly defining the classifications, leaving states to individually determine and declare essential versus non-essential business.

Because this is uncharted territory, and understandably, the local, state, and federal authorities are making decisions swiftly with as much information as is available to them, our members, in some states, have been on the receiving end of what are surely unintended consequences because of some state classifications of essential versus non-essential. These consequences may have a detrimental effect on the health and well-being of occupants within a particular building environment.

While plumbers and contractors are clearly cited in some state classifications, HVAC technicians and air duct cleaning companies have been overlooked. The argument should be made that language such as “…and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation…” as was included in the California state designation, directly grants essential status to NADCA member companies. I implore you to ensure that you are recognizing and citing HVAC and air duct cleaning companies as essential businesses.

Below are classifications recently released from California and New Jersey, two states with some of the highest infection rates. Note the bolded text:

California classification:

*Plumbers, electricians, exterminators,* ***and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation*** *of residences, “essential activities,” and “essential businesses.”*

NJ classification:

*Persons who are employed, contracted, or responsible for performing duties necessary to:*

* ***ensure maintenance of acceptable conditions at facilities providing health and medical care, veterinary and/or daily residential care facilities,***
* *prevent an immediate danger to the public safety arising from unattended chemical, industrial or other processes involving hazardous materials,*
* *restore, maintain, or safely operate a public utility, transportation or communication system,*
* *permit operations of a business for the purpose of providing fuel, heating, electrical, plumbing* ***and other services necessary to prevent an immediate threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the public,***
* *conduct news reporting activities.*

Also, below are excerpts from the ASHRAE1 Position Document on Airborne Infectious Diseases, with key sections noted in bold for your consideration:

There are various methods of infectious disease transmission, including contact (both direct and indirect), transmission by large droplets, and **inhalation of airborne particles containing infectious microorganisms. The practice of the HVAC professional in reducing disease transmission is focused primarily on those diseases transmitted by airborne particles.** (as is the case with COVID-19)

…when outbreaks occur in the workplace, **transmission through HVAC systems must be considered**.

…transmission occurs not only through direct contact or large droplets, as is the long-standing public health tradition, but also through the airborne route, as newer data suggest**, HVAC systems may contribute far more both to transmission of disease and, potentially, to reduction of transmission risk**

… **Ventilation represents a primary infectious disease control strategy through dilution of room air around a source and removal of infectious agents (CDC 2005).**

As you know, Italy has been the hardest hit country in terms of mitigating the death toll and recovering from this pandemic. NADCA member and board member, Andrea Casa, located in Northern Italy, has provided a very telling update to our Board and I’d like to share it with you, attached. You’ll see that the Italian authorities have asked HVAC cleaning companies to continue to work to disinfect HVAC components to assist in stopping the spread of COVID-19. These companies are deemed essential. Considering the severity of infection in Italy and the desire in the United States to avoid repeating their mistakes, I ask you to think and move proactively.

On behalf of the thousands of individuals working to help keep our indoor environment clean and safe, I respectfully ask you to add “HVAC technicians” and “air duct cleaning technicians” to the state list of *essential* businesses so that our members may continue to serve the communities where their services are so desperately needed.

Respectfully,



Mark Zarzeczny , ASCS, CVI

President and Chairman of the Board

1ASHRAE, founded in 1894, is a global society advancing human well-being through sustainable technology for the built environment. The Society and its members focus on building systems, energy efficiency, indoor air quality, refrigeration and sustainability within the industry. Through research, standards writing, publishing and continuing education, ASHRAE shapes tomorrow’s built environment today. ASHRAE was formed as the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers by the merger in 1959 of American Society of Heating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHAE) founded in 1894 and The American Society of Refrigerating Engineers (ASRE) founded in 1904.

From: **Andrea Casa** <andrea.casa@alisea.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 17, 2020 at 9:05 AM
Subject: R: Thank you
To: Jodi Araujo <jodi@nadca.com>, April Yungen <airmgmt@tstonramp.com>, Dan Stradford <Dstradford@aol.com>, Jim Castellano <BetterAir@optonline.net>, Mark Zarzeczny <ductone123@gmail.com>, Mike Dexter <mikedexter@airqualitycontrolenv.com>, Richard Lantz <richard@virginiaairductcleaners.com>, pkeller2@service-techcorp.com <pkeller2@service-techcorp.com>, A Plus Enviro Services <hugoh@aplusenviroservices.com>
Cc: Kristy Cohen <kcohen@nadca.com>, McWilliams, Caitlin <cmcwilliams@nadca.com>

Dear Jodi, dear friends,

first of all, I also want to express my welcome to our new President, our Officers and our newest board members!

I missed you a lot and it was a great regret not having been able to participate in the Annual Meeting in San Diego!

For now we are all doing well, even if the situation in northern Italy is really critical. Given the very high number of cases, hospitals are collapsing and there are no more intensive care places.

For about 20 days Italy has been completely blocked and all non-essential activities have been suspended.

The authorities have asked companies capable of carrying out disinfection operations to work hard to carry out this service in HVAC systems and in closed environments.

We are considered essential companies at the moment and for this reason we have been exempted from the duty of temporary closure.

I can assure you that the members of NADCA in Italy are doing very well and they are also doing grueling shifts to help their communities. I think we can be proud of it.

For now I have no news of cases of contagion among our members and I hope I never have.

I hope everything will be all right and that I will be able to hug you again soon!

Andrea

**Dott. Andrea Casa – Amministratore Delegato**

Update as of 3/20/2020

Hi all my friends,

I agree on Dan's request to use my previous email.

I would also like to make some clarifications that perhaps could help us make decisions:

- Currently in Italy the sanitization of indoor living, work and care environments is considered essential. The sanitization of HVAC systems can be considered essential when it constitutes a part of the sanitization process of the environments.

- Some of our customers, who are considered essential activities (supermarkets, food and pharmaceutical companies), have sent us statements that said that without our intervention they would have to suspend their business, because there would no longer have been the environmental conditions of safety. We presented these statements to the authorities and they gave us the status of "essential company for the food and pharmaceutical production chain". Perhaps the same mechanism can be repeated by you too.

 - The importance of cleaning HVAC systems is emerging with full force in Italy, because a recent research by the Italian Society of Environmental Medicine (SIMA) has shown that in the last month the peak of infections has occurred in the days and in the areas with a very high pollution of PM10 and PM 2.5 in the air. The study says the virus manages to "coagulate" on airborne dust that acts as a carrier for its distribution. In practice, what is emerging is that the dust in the air is able to significantly amplify the possibility of contracting the virus, well beyond the safety distance of 1.5 meters. And the fact that in air systems too often there are significant quantities of dust, potentially populated by the virus, is emerging nationally as a major public health problem. I myself have repeatedly spoken in newspapers, radio and national television to affirm this concept: the systems are often dirty and emit dust that can carry the virus. All this activity is bearing fruit and the perception of the importance of our work is growing.

This, too, is perhaps an element that could be used in the United States to write to the authorities.

I indicate one of the many links that speak in recent days of the scientific study I mentioned (unfortunately it is in Italian ...):

<https://valori.it/coronavirus-lombardia-polveri-sottili-pm10/>

I hope to be useful to you and NADCA, even if from a distance.

I will keep you informed of any news. By now here in Lombardy (my region) we live in a war scenario and work helps me not to be afraid.

 See you soon,

**Dott. Andrea Casa – Amministratore Delegato**