

Ontario clamps down on non-essential construction



The [Ontario government](#) has updated its list of essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The list of businesses classified as essential has been reduced.

Only critical construction projects have been deemed allowed to continue, including industrial projects such as refineries and petrochemical plants and infrastructure projects such as new hospitals, roads and bridges. New starts in residential projects will stop, while residential construction that is near completion will continue.

The association representing the residential construction industry in Ontario has agreed with the province's decision and described it as "balanced and appropriate."

“We are pleased by the government’s decision to keep certain residential construction going,” said Richard Lyall, president of Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON). “As the premier has rightly noted, there are many people who are waiting for their homes to be finished in the next few weeks. We already have a significant housing crisis in Ontario and most of these homeowners who have sold their homes are at risk of being left on the street without these measures.”

All businesses not covered by the updated Emergency Order are required to close by April 4 at 11:59 p.m. These new restrictions will be in effect for 14 days, with the possibility of an extension as the situation unfolds.

“We are facing a critical moment in the fight against COVID-19 and we must do everything in our power to keep everyone safe and healthy and prevent our health care system from being overwhelmed,” said [Ont. Premier Doug Ford](#).

“Everyone must do their part to stop the spread and flatten the curve. If you are not an essential business, you need to close your doors, work from home if possible and play a role to help contain this outbreak. This is a matter of life and death.”

The updated list will direct additional businesses to close and restricts specified businesses to providing services by alternate methods such as curbside pick and delivery, except for exceptional circumstances.

For the full updated list, visit www.ontario.ca/page/list-essential-workplaces#section-10.