

Idaho Insider by Suzi Budge

LIVING WITH A PANDEMIC – National Trade Groups Keep Petroleum Marketers on the Forefront

Never before have our state, regional and national trade groups played such a vital role to convey critical information to petroleum marketers on the ground. PMAA, NACS, WPMA and IPM&CSA pulled our collective resources together to advocate for the industry and to keep members abreast of the many pandemic-related changes. Be it emergency waivers for operations, funding to stay in business, or deciphering new safety requirements, your advocates worked in emergency mode for weeks to provide members with the most up to date information needed to stay in business safely. We've moved away from weekly crisis calls, but that doesn't mean we're off duty. For better or worse, we are truly in a brave new world, and as you already know, it's not over yet. Please stay tuned! Watch your email and check our websites for the latest.

IPM&CSA ROLLS WITH THE PUNCHES – Coeur d'Alene Convention and PAC Golf Canceled, Member Events Go Virtual

It was a sad day, but a concession to the realities and uncertainty of a pandemic environment when the IPM&CSA board made the tough decision to cancel the 2020 Convention and Trade Show in Coeur d'Alene as being in the best interest of the safety of our members and participants. Same with our PAC golf events. Like most (maybe all?) petroleum marketer groups, Idaho canceled face to face gatherings and has moved to virtual meetings. PSTF has done the same, as have government entities. We all have a few Zoom disaster stories to tell along the way, but we have made it work. We have to, so we do.

IDAHO GOVERNOR INNOVATES IN A PANDEMIC

Governor Little Rolls Out Programs to Help — Federal COVID Money Supports Business, Local Government, Unemployed. Here's a summary of unique Idaho programs developed to support Idahoans (data as of July 31, 2020):

- **Idaho Rebound Cash Grants for Small Businesses** More than \$75 million given to more than 8,700 Idaho small businesses in cash payments of up to \$10,000.
- **Local Government Authority to Support Businesses** More than \$94 million to local governments.
- **Return to Work Incentives** More than 26,000 employees received \$25.7 million in return to work bonuses, with more than 4,300 employers who applied on behalf of their workers.
- **PPE for Small Businesses** 4,233 orders of masks, gloves and sanitizer worth \$1,082,150.
- **Public Safety Initiative** 10 to 20% one-time reduction in property taxes for participating cities or counties who commit to use federal funds to cover local public safety and pass on savings to taxpayers.

IDAHO POLITICAL LANDSCAPE – The Shifting Sands of an Emergency

Primary Elections Go All Absentee – If there was a single move that rocked the Idaho Statehouse early in the emergency, it was the decision to go to all mail in ballots for Idaho's primary election. Changing the dates and the process, decisions made by Governor Little, Secretary of State Denny and later a federal judge, caused more than a little consternation with legislators, and started a broader conversation about who has what authority during a declared emergency. A related battle involves initiatives and how signatures can be gathered during lock down. This one has already taken Idaho to the Supreme Court. Expect to see these and other crazy new issues play out in the next legislative session, be it a special session called by the Governor (which is in question) or when lawmakers return in January 2021.

November General Elections Still up in the Air – And the jury is still out on exactly how the November General Elections will work. Will polling places be open? Will the dates be changed (again)? Will we be waiting til Thanksgiving for the results? Let's hope not, but stand by, because the dust hasn't settled on this issue yet.

2021 LEGISLATURE – How Do They Conduct Business in a Pandemic?

No big surprise here either, but we don't really know how things at the Statehouse are going to work come 2021. Will masks be required? Can hearings be conducted virtually? How do people testify and communicate with elected officials? Will the public even be allowed in the building? Legislative leadership has approved funds to improve technology in the Capitol, but it remains to be seen how that will work for those of us who aren't legislators, but need to talk to them to explain how what they do impacts us? Access to lawmakers is vital to effective advocacy. Your personal relationship with your representative is more important than ever, so please don't miss an opportunity to connect.

IDAHO *Weights and Measures* RULEMAKING Idaho Fees are Changing – Here's What you Need to Know
The Idaho Department of Agriculture picked up where they left off in 2019 to continue their effort to raise fees in the Weights and Measures Program. Although the process isn't final, we believe we have pushed back successfully to prevent the original proposal to double device fees from the current \$6 to \$12. The latest proposal phases in a fee increase over three years beginning in 2022, and gradually increases fees from \$7 to \$8 per device, in 2024. We have also stood firm in advocating for a 50/50 funding split between industry fees and State General Fund dollars. The Weights and Measures program fundamentally protects Idaho's consumers above all, and we have and will continue to make that case to elected officials.