



## Brewery Shutdown Safety Guidance

COVID-19 is disrupting craft breweries across America. Many breweries are being required to discontinue operations or are grappling with the decision to shut down or try to continue production. In the event of a full or partial shutdown, this guidance from the BA Safety Subcommittee will help brewers safely cutback or discontinue brewery production.

A shutdown may be called for in the following instances:

- An employee tested positive for COVID-19
- An employee is suspected to have contracted COVID-19.
- A guest tests positive for COVID-19 and notifies someone.
- Government Required shutdown.
- Corporate Required shutdown.

If a shutdown is necessary, in some cases it may be possible to continue production during the shutdown. We are calling this a “warm shutdown” which includes reduced staff and limited department functions. By contrast a “cold shutdown” ceases all business activity. In either case, there are safety concerns to be aware of.

### Warm shutdown

In the event of a warm shutdown there will most likely be a reduced staff (skeleton crew) in order to limit exposure to larger groups of people. It may or may not be safe to continue normal production with a skeleton crew. Consider the risks and honestly assess whether it is worth it to continue brewing right now. Any decision should be met with the same scrutiny of safety-minded brewers. To help assess the situation, employ the procedures found in [Hazard Assessment](#), a simple, systematic procedure that helps identify and overcome workplace safety hazards.

Some safety guidelines for the skeleton crew to consider are as follows.

- Only trained and authorized employees shall perform the tasks.
  - Create detailed lists of who can access facilities during a warm shutdown complete with names, tasks, and phone numbers.
- Document all emergency contacts and skeleton crews.
- Avoid having a lone worker in the brewery. If one must work alone, ensure they have a communication device and a procedure exists to notify another member of your team when they arrive and when they leave.
- Establish emergency check-in protocol with department heads (e.g. 3 times per week) either via phone or video-chat platforms.
- During shutdown periods, CO<sub>2</sub> in buildings may elevate to unsafe levels due to ongoing fermentation and/or from any leaks or other issues. Be cognizant of that and use a 4-gas air monitor during shutdown period entries (evacuate if CO<sub>2</sub> is >3.0%).
- PPE for specific tasks must always be used and additional cleaning and disinfecting may be warranted especially for shared equipment.
- Make plans for in-process beer to minimize loss or plans to continue with minimal production. Determine a reasonable workload for reduced staff. Only do tasks that are considered business critical.
- Develop shutdown and startup procedures (think about safety and quality concerns including chemical systems, boilers, HVAC/ventilation settings, in-process beer, etc.).

## Cold Shutdown

In the event of a cold shutdown there should be no non-essential staff onsite. Essential staff should be kept to a 2 person team consisting of knowledgeable/experienced staff such as supervisors and/or managers. The purpose of entry during a cold shutdown is to ensure safe shutdown of equipment and security of facility.

During times of economic insecurity, some people will take advantage. Make sure your business is secure, be it with locks, alarms, game cameras, whatever. When checking in on your business, make sure to alert others to your whereabouts.

Some safety guidelines for cold shutdown entry are as follows.

- Create a detailed record of who can access facilities during a cold shutdown including names, tasks, and phone numbers.
- Avoid having a lone worker in the brewery. If one must work alone, ensure they have a communication device and a procedure exists to notify another member of your team when they arrive and when they leave.
- Entry during cold shutdown should include the following PPE:
  - Safety glasses, safety shoes, pants, long sleeve shirt, nitrile gloves at all times, n-95 respirator at all times.
- Use a 4-gas monitor at all times to ensure no high levels of CO<sub>2</sub> in the building.
  - Follow the same alarm and procedure requirements as the area CO<sub>2</sub> monitors (e.g., immediately evacuate if CO<sub>2</sub> is >3.0%).
- PPE must always be used and additional cleaning and disinfecting may be warranted especially for shared equipment.
- Some reasonable work to be performed during a cold shutdown:
  - Main duties for entry during a shutdown is to ensure building and equipment integrity during shutdown – ensure all doors are closed and locked, look for leaks, damage, or any other adverse conditions.
  - Ensure all beer is held in tanks until after the shutdown (e.g., beer, wort, etc.).
  - Adjusting tank temperatures
  - Dropping/harvesting yeast, consider steps to take which would sustain yeast health
- If the facility has experienced exposure to COVID\_19, upon exit of the facility, employees must:
  - Dispose of respirator.
  - Remove outer clothing used inside the building. Place clothing into a garbage bag to take it home to launder before next use.
  - Any items used inside the facility such as cell phones must be wiped or sprayed with disinfectant.
  - Dispose of gloves.
  - If needed, put-on clean outer clothing.
  - Wash hands and arms thoroughly with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Consider changing locks for added security of facility.

## Resuming Business

After the shutdown period is over there will be an urgent need to get back up and running as fast as possible. If you do not have one already, create a plan detailing how to safely startup all equipment and procedures. Document procedures and ensure all department heads are trained.

Some safety guidelines for resuming business are as follows.

- Prior to entry into any facility, other than Shutdown Team, execute the following:
  - Confirm with Government agency or Corporate that reentry is allowed.
  - Clean and disinfect office areas and bathrooms of facilities.
  - Clean and disinfect all Production Areas.

- Confirm with management to start informing employees.
  - Managers to notify employees of restart date and time.
- Inspect all equipment prior to startup as a period of inactivity may have changed essential functionality.
- Continue to be aware of anyone who may be sick and follow CDC guidance.

**Additional COVID-19 resources:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

<https://www.brewersassociation.org/brewing-industry-updates/coronavirus-resource-center/>