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Hawaii construction industry bands together for Covid-19 safety pledge: Slideshow

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More than 150 general contractors, engineering firms, developers, labor unions and others associated with Hawaii's construction industry have united to sign a pledge outlining their commitment to strict requirements to prevent the spread of the coronavirus on job sites.



COURTESY ANTHOLOGY GROUP/GCA OF HAWAII

The General Contractors Association of Hawaii initiated the effort after forming a GCA Covid-19 task force led by [Lance Wilhelm](#) of The Wilhelm Group and [Gerry Majkut](#) of Hawaiian Dredging Construction Co.

The pledge outlines the steps contractors are taking to prevent the spread of Covid-19 on construction sites, including personal responsibility and screening, social distancing, hand washing, limiting the number of workers on elevators and hoists and communication. Construction has continued during the coronavirus shutdowns as an essential business on every Island but Kauai, which has had limited activity.

"This is pretty unprecedented for the construction industry to all agree and stand together on an issue," [Cheryl Walthall](#), executive vice president of GCA of Hawaii,

told Pacific Business News, adding that 151 companies, organizations and unions signed the pledge.

With situations changing by the day during the Covid-19 pandemic, Walthall said the industry wanted to be prepared for whatever happens, especially since "construction is always the initiative looked at in times of crisis."

"We really need to make sure our job sites are safe because if there is a case and it spreads, our industry could be shut down," Walthall said. "We thought we need to make sure our elected leaders know we're taking this seriously and we're putting the right safety measures in place."

Task force member Michael Young, president of Albert C. Kobayashi Inc., which is building the Azure Ala Moana mixed-use tower on Keeaumoku Street in Honolulu, noted that the steps being taken, which also include temperature checks at the entrance to the work site, staggered eating hours, distanced eating areas and regular sanitation are intended to create a safe job site for workers.

"Normally we're competitors, but in this battle against Covid-19 we've really all come together to find best practices, to find good practices, we communicate regularly, we share our experiences and we're all looking out for each other," he said in a video statement.

The other members of the GCA Covid-19 task force include Jason Ames, Grace Pacific LLC, Rick Heltzel of Healy Tibbitts Builders, Tom Diersbock of Hensel Phelps, Leslie Isemoto of Isemoto Contracting Co., Tyler Dillon of Layton Construction and Glen Kaneshige of Nordic PCL Construction.

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