

**Email sent by Ranger Kidwell-Ross, Editor of WorldSweeper.com and Director of World Sweeping Association, to FEMA on April 7, 2020; similar information verbally provided to CDC (Centers for Disease Control) on April 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Hello,

I am writing you as the world's most prolific author in an industry that most people have never thought about: power sweeping. That is to say, the machinery that cleans streets, as well as most all of the commercial parking lots, in the United States on a frequent basis. I have covered this industry for 33 years. My website, [WorldSweeper.com](http://WorldSweeper.com), is the largest information resource in the world for BMPs and other information about pavement cleaning.

I do not know who to contact at FEMA about this question. Please forward this information to the appropriate personnel.

The crux: I believe the small army of parking lot sweepers that sweep all commercial businesses that are still open during the essential business shutdown might have the ability to sanitize the area in front of those businesses. There are widespread reports both in the general news media and among sweeping contractors that a high incidence of masks and gloves are being discarded into parking lots. This would seem to pose more than the standard litter problem. For your information, I am linking two recent articles discussing the topic of masks/gloves being left. A web review will unearth many more:

<https://www.silive.com/life-and-culture/j66j-2020/03/dc1ec1c1c38893/its-disgusting-gloves-and-masks-litter-grocery-store-parking-lots-during-covid19-crisis.html>

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/04/02/nation/boston-officials-residents-please-stop-throwing-masks-gloves-ground/>

The vacuum-based sweepers used to clean parking lots have a dust suppression system. To keep down dust during sweeping, multiple spray nozzles mounted in strategic locations on the outside of the sweeper are fed via an RV pump out of a @100 gallon water tank. These sweepers are currently in use in retail parking areas several times per week. Might it make sense, during the pandemic, to add some type of anti-bacterial agent to the water tanks, such that the sweepers would be, in essence, helping to disinfect the parking lot in front of the retail stores, as well as in the load-in areas, etc., wherever they operate on the properties?

For example, I am aware of a product called “Arena” (made by <https://www.armchem.com/home.php>) that is EPA certified for SARS, non-toxic in terms of being applied as an aerosol and relatively inexpensive, at about \$30 to treat 100 gallons. Using the dust suppression system installed on most all on sweepers, along with the front bumper-mounted spray bars that some of them have, this or a comparable agent could be sprayed onto the parking area in front of commercial businesses still in operation, as a COVID-19 mitigation.

As the editor of the largest information resource on the Internet for this industry I would have the ability to inform and coordinate this type of effort if it might be deemed of value. I would welcome a conversation on the phone with anyone who would like to have more information about the concept. I know this is somewhat “out-of-the-box thinking” but I believe that’s exactly the kind of thinking that can make a difference these days.

I have attached a photo of a typical parking lot sweeper to this email to better allow those not familiar with our industry to know what it is I’m talking about.

As a secondary item, I am concerned that throughout the commercial sector, due to lower revenue, essential (and thus still open) businesses have almost uniformly cut down on the number of nights per week they are having their parking areas swept. When they are not cleaned of potentially contaminated debris (many people are also taking products out of containers and discarding the containers on the parking lot before storing them in their cars for the drive home) on a nightly basis, the potential for ongoing transmittal of disease would clearly seem to be higher. Although I have encouraged my readers to try to convince commercial property managers of the wisdom of sweeping seven nights per week, in many cases the small extra cost is seen as prohibitive.

My professional experience indicates that a consideration should be given for mandating nightly sweeping for commercial retail businesses that are staying open. However, our contractors have no way to do more than just recommend.

I am available in my office from 9-5 Pacific and on my cell phone at other times.

Cheers,  
Ranger Kidwell-Ross, M.A.



Ranger Kidwell-Ross  
Editor, [WorldSweeper.com](http://WorldSweeper.com)  
Executive Director, World Sweeping Association

o: 360.724.7355 c: 360.739.7323  
[ranger@worldsweeper.com](mailto:ranger@worldsweeper.com)  
[director@worldsweepingpros.org](mailto:director@worldsweepingpros.org)  
[www.worldsweepingpros.org](http://www.worldsweepingpros.org)

**Member, PAVEMENT Hall of Fame**  
**Winner of U.S. APEX Awards of Excellence, 1994-2019**