The novel coronavirus arrived in the United States early in 2020 and quickly impacted the everyday lives of each and every one of us. The arrival of COVID-19 magnified the need for the trainings provided by the Alaska Forum Environmental Training and Apprenticeship Program (ETAP). In times like these, it became more important than ever to make health and safety trainings available to workers across Alaska. The option to host trainings in a traditional classroom setting ended abruptly and the challenge became how to continue to deliver critical environmental worker training to audiences across the state during a pandemic.

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100+ TRAINED within two weeks of COVID-19 arriving in Alaska

Partnered with our training providers, the Alaska Forum was quick to respond and immediately developed distance delivered training curricula to address the spread of the novel coronavirus in Alaska’s workplaces and communities. Within two weeks of the arrival of the virus in Alaska, over 100 individuals representing past ETAP graduates, community and employer partners, state, local and federal governments, and nonprofit groups took part in COVID-19 Awareness and advanced level Prevention and Decontamination training sessions at no cost to them.
The demand for online trainings continued to be high so we have been working with our training provider partners to transform the distance delivery platform to offer other important environmental worker health and safety classes such as HazWoper Refresher.

Beginning in May, almost all trainings offered by ETAP will be available by distance learning.

The distance options have benefited both local and rural participants by enabling involvement regardless of location. As health and travel restrictions begin to ease, many will still choose to engage remotely, this will be especially true for rural Alaska workers. Distance classes will permit more rural Alaskans to obtain and maintain critical certifications essential to performing their jobs safely.

We are grateful for our training partners quick response in helping us get distance learning off the ground to still serve communities across Alaska in this critical time. We are also grateful for our funders, ETAP Trainings are possible through funding from the Alaska Workforce and Investment Board STEP Grant and the EPA Environmental Workforce Development Job Training Grant.