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**NEW RIVER VALLEY PUBLIC HEALTH TASK FORCE RELEASES
WORKING SMART. WORKING SAFE. GUIDEBOOK**

*The guidebook outlines promising practices for small/local business operations
as they transition to re-opening in the age of COVID-19 following the expiration
of the Governor's Executive Order 53*

(NEW RIVER VALLEY, Virginia) – In anticipation of the upcoming expiration of Governor Northam's Executive Order 53, the New River Valley Public Health Task Force Recovery Team has created *Working Smart, Working Safe.*, a resource for small and local business operations transitioning to re-opening following the COVID-19 outbreak.

"This guidebook is a tool leaders across the region developed for our local businesses," said Kevin Byrd, Executive Director of the New River Valley Regional Commission. "It doesn't supersede any forthcoming direction from Governor Northam; however, it does provide critical information that we want our local business leaders to have in an effort to help them prepare for re-opening their operations."

Working Smart. Working Safe. is a resource to help local businesses navigate reopening in their communities amid COVID-19. It is to be used to as a guideline to help serve customers and accommodate employees. The collaborative and comprehensive document was created by the New River Valley Regional Commission, Onward NRV, and chamber of commerce and tourism offices across the region.

"The New River Valley has done a great job of addressing and containing the COVID-19 outbreak," said Dr. Noelle Bissell, Director, New River Health District. "While this virus isn't going away, we have to learn how to live with it and progress toward finding a new normal. The resource guide for re-opening we're providing to local and small businesses is a step in that direction."

Sources for the guidebook include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); Virginia Small Business Commission Emergency Task Force; Food and Drug Administration (FDA); Virginia Department of Health; U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Virginia Chamber of Commerce; National Park Service; and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

To view the guidebook, visit www.montva.com/coronavirus/resources.

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About New River Valley Regional Commission

The New River Valley Regional Commission is one of 21 planning districts in Virginia whose commissions are chartered under Virginia law. The organization encompasses the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, and the City of Radford. The purpose of the Regional Commission is to promote regional cooperation, to coordinate the activities and policies of member local governments, and to provide planning assistance to local governments.

About the New River Valley Public Health Task Force

The New River Valley Public Health Task Force is composed of local health, public safety, education and government agencies that work to proactively provide local residents and communities with information about COVID-19, to coordinate efforts to reduce its local impact and to facilitate community recovery.

For more information, visit www.montva.com/coronavirus and www.vdh.virginia.gov, or call the New River Health District public health call center at 540-267-8240. Hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. After hours, leave a message.