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[ONLINE VERSION AT FLORIDABUSINESS.ORG](https://www.floridabusiness.org)

**CDC COVID-19 VIRUS GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESSES AVAILABLE ONLINE** – Based on what is currently known about the coronavirus (COVID-19), the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has made available its [Resources for Businesses and Employers](#) on helping prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illnesses in non-healthcare settings. This resource page also provides the CDC guidance on [environmental cleaning and disinfection](#). Businesses needing COVID-19 guidance from the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration can find it [here](#).

**GOV. DESANTIS ACTIVATES EMERGENCY BUSINESS DAMAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEY FOR COVID-19** – Governor DeSantis announced activation of the [Business Damage Assessment survey](#) to assess the impact of COVID-19 on Florida's local business operations. The survey will evaluate businesses affected by COVID-19 and the impacts the virus has had on the local economy, so actions to implement appropriate relief programs can begin. Results from the survey will be shared with state agencies and local partners. Surveys submitted by small businesses can be used to access the Small Business Administration's [Economic Injury Disaster Loan](#), made available for COVID-19 through the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act. For inquiries or assistance with the survey, businesses can email [Emergency Support Function](#).

**HELP RECOGNIZE FLORIDA'S GROWING COMPANIES** – The 2020 GrowFL Florida Companies to Watch (FLCTW) nominations are open! GrowFL FLCTW celebrates growing second-stage companies headquartered in Florida. The program was developed by the Edward Lowe Foundation as a unique way to recognize and honor second-stage companies that demonstrate high performance in the marketplace with innovative strategies and processes, making them "worth watching." [Click here for information on the GrowFL program and on how to nominate candidate companies.](#)

**TWENTY CYBERSECURITY STATISTICS MANUFACTURERS CANNOT IGNORE** – Cybersecurity threats are a huge business risk for all companies. Small and medium-sized businesses, including manufacturers, are especially vulnerable to attacks. They are often seen as an easy entry point – a "soft" target – into larger businesses and government agencies. One of the first steps when prioritizing how to manage your business risk is to gather information about the threat environment. The [20 important statistics listed here](#) focus on what manufacturers need to know about the "what" and "so what" of cybersecurity so they can start planning their "now what" actions. Additional [cybersecurity related resources](#) are also available.

**2020 CENSUS INVITATIONS ARRIVE MARCH 12-20** – Through March 20, about 143 million U.S. households will receive an initial invitation by mail to respond to the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau has released [informational copies of the invitations](#), enclosed materials and subsequent reminders households will receive. Households are encouraged to respond when they receive their invitation. Depending on how likely an area is to respond online, households will receive either an invitation encouraging them to reply online, by phone or by the mailed invitation along with a paper questionnaire. [Access to the full release and press kits is available via this link.](#)

**INDUSTRIAL ROBOT INSTALLATIONS INCREASE WORLDWIDE** – According to the executive summary of the [2019 International Federation of Robotics report on industrial robots](#), global robot installations increased by 6% in 2018 to 422,271 units and worth \$16.5 billion (without software and peripherals). The global operational stock of robots was computed at 2,439,543 units (+15%). The automotive industry remains the largest customer industry with 30% of total installations, ahead of electrical/electronics (25%), metal and machinery (10%), plastics and chemical products (5%), and food and beverages (3%). For the eighth year in a row, robot installations reached a new peak level of 40,373 units (+22%) in the United States.

**THE HOUSING SUPPLY SHORTAGE: STATE OF THE STATES** – According to a [housing market analysis](#) released last month, 29 states have a housing deficit. This according to Freddie Mac, the congressionally chartered, shareholder owned corporation that packages mortgages to provide liquidity to the U.S. mortgage market. When only those 29 states are considered, Freddie Mac found the U.S. housing shortage grew significantly from 2.5 million units to 3.3 million units. For Florida, the difference between the state's 2018 vacancy rate and its historical average was -3.43%. This shrinkage in vacancy rate places Florida's housing shortfall at fourth worst in the nation behind Oregon (-6.5%), California (-4.02%) and Minnesota (-3.79%).

**TRUCK EMPTY BACKHAUL: A FLORIDA FREIGHT STORY** – Empty backhaul is one of the freight industry challenges facing Florida. Being a consumer state, Florida consumes more than it produces and more freight comes into Florida than what it exports to other states. In the trucking industry, backhaul is the return movement of a truck from its original destination to its point of origin. When the truck is not hauling cargo during this movement, it is considered an empty backhaul. The percentage of empty trucks leaving the state ranges between approximately 30% and 50% depending on the corridor. [Learn more about the Florida Department of Transportation analysis and recommendations report](#) on truck empty backhaul.

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