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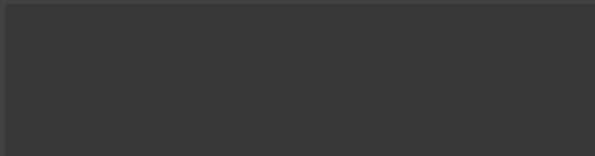
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Going to GIE+EXPO? Here's what to expect

October 13, 2021 - By [Seth Jones](#)



Est. reading time: 2:30



Photo: GIE+EXPO

For many attending next week's **[GIE+EXPO](#)**, it will be their first trade show since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Good news for Louisville: GIE+EXPO is not their first big event since the pandemic. The city and the Kentucky Exposition Center (KEC) know some of what to expect.

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had our Louder than Life festival; 30,000 people were here for Metallica. (GIE+EXPO attendees) will be in good shape.”

An outdoor music festival is all fine and good, but what about something indoors, like the trade show floor at the KEC? Kris Kiser, president of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, managing partner of the GIE+EXPO, has the answer after attending a recently completed trade show at KEC.

“I was just there for the Utility Expo; it will likely be the largest show, by square feet, in America,” Kiser said. “It went off without a hitch, and they had really big numbers.”

Kiser is expecting big numbers at this year’s event, the first since GIE+EXPO was canceled in 2020 because of the pandemic. He said that pre-registered landscape contractor attendance numbers are up over 2019, which was the largest GIE+EXPO ever. Meanwhile dealer attendance and exhibitor staff are both down 8 percent. Kiser describes the square footage of the show as “really good,” adding that the number has taken a hit with Canadian and Chinese exhibitors facing travel restrictions.

Last week GIE+EXPO asked that all attendees be vaccinated for COVID-19. If an attendee cannot be vaccinated, they ask that person to wear a mask. GIE+EXPO ordered 15,000 masks that will be made available to attendees.

Some booths might require masks as well, Kiser said.

“The booths are like embassy grounds — they belong to the exhibitor,” he said. “Whatever they want to do in their respective space is up to them. I know an exhibitor who, if there was a mask mandate, they wouldn’t exhibit. We have other folks who want people to mask. Any exhibitor can police their booth however they want.

“We do want it to be a vaccinated event,” Kiser added. “We’re doing everything we can, protocol wise, that the state has asked us to do, or that we think is appropriate at this time.”

Kiser added an interesting note that the KEC, early in the pandemic, served as a hospital. One of the reasons it was selected, he said, is because of the building’s ability to move air.

“The (U.S. Army) Corps of Engineers, when they were creating hospitals, (chose KEC) because of its ability to move air,” Kiser said. “The KEC had to demonstrate that the air changed out in X amount of hours ... it’s a big, spread-out venue ... We’re enthused by that. It has a third party certification.”

Kiser said he is “heartened” by attendance numbers and believes that attendees will use their common sense and goodwill to maintain a safe environment.

Battle added that the city is looking forward to GIE+EXPO’s return and asked for more of that goodwill when it comes to local businesses.

“We’re wide open,” he said. “(But) we’re still suffering like a lot of cities, in terms of service levels. I know our restaurants, distilleries and bars are doing everything they can to close the gap.”

This article is tagged with [2021 GIE+EXPO](#), [GIE+EXPO](#), [louisville](#) and posted in [Today's Green Industry News](#)



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