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Our theme this year is, ironically, "Engaging in a world of change." Never did I imagine, when we announced this theme in December, that this was the change we would see: more than 1,200 employees on maximum telework, making detailed arrangements with DOE in case dispatchers need to live at work, and our incredible and adaptable field crews changing their practices to account for social distancing and wearing masks.

At the same time, we continue to meet or exceed all of our 2020 goals, which is a testament to the dedication, adaptability and professionalism of the fantastic team at WAPA and the strength of our partnerships with our customers.

The health and safety of our employees are of the utmost importance. As I said in the [most recent Closed Circuit](#), the only return is a safe return. Fourteen WAPA employees have contracted the virus and an additional person is presumed positive. Four of those are active cases, while, fortunately, the rest have recovered.

The emergency response team at WAPA continues to prepare for an eventual re-entry into the workplace. Yet, in most cases, I do not anticipate a quick return. Fourteen states in our 15-state territory are moving in the wrong direction when it comes to COVID-19 and our re-entry criteria. The other state could go either way in the coming weeks.

We are increasing our necessary maintenance and construction activities, especially as we prepare for the coming winter months, to ensure the continued reliable and safe operation of the grid. We have implemented strict guidance for entering WAPA-owned or jointly-owned facilities and working around WAPA employees, including the mandatory wearing of masks, and I thank you in advance for following this guidance to help keep all of our employees safe.

Turning the tide of this virus will take a communal effort, including sharing our plans, leading practices and lessons learned. If you would like to see our [Responsible Workplace Re-entry Plan](#) or accompanying templates and guidance, contact your respective regional manager or email COVID-19@wapa.gov. I have discussed our COVID-19 actions at recent virtual customer meetings and am available to speak with your groups if you are interested. We have also initiated an information-sharing effort with APPA members. We are open to sharing whatever we can about our COVID-19 response, so do not hesitate to reach out.

WAPA remains committed to our mission and to serving our customers in the midst of these unprecedented times. We are here for you and will see it through. Together, we will ensure the West is continuously supplied with reliable and safe electricity that remains the lifeblood of our economy and way of life.

Until we can meet again in person, stay safe, physically distance, wash your hands and wear your mask.

Mark A. Gabriel | Administrator and Chief Executive Officer

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