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Good day,

Like all of you, we are adapting to a new operating and working environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are many activities occurring around WAPA to protect our staff, successfully deliver on our mission and provide stability for our customers.

Our rates remain flat, and we do not anticipate any increases this year. As WAPA operates at cost, you can be assured that we are being wise with our funds and focusing on mission-essential and future-essential tasks beyond pandemic-related activities.

One of these future-essential tasks regards our regions' various moves into new energy imbalance management options, including the Southwest Power Pool's Western Energy Imbalance Service, the California Independent System Operator's Western Energy Imbalance Market or an evaluation between those two. Another is a study to combine transmission rates in the Southwest. Our goal is to proceed with all due speed towards these decisions and transitions to best meet our customers' needs based on their region-specific circumstances.

As always, we are focused on reliability, and each day we work toward that goal so it can be one less thing to concern you and your communities.

We continue to work on process improvements and cost containment while also further protecting our staff. Mission-critical personnel are the primary focus as we work to ensure safe social distancing for maintenance and operations employees. We are working to get as many of our real-time merchant staff teleworking as possible. These were not positions originally designed as telework eligible, and significant work was accomplished by the real-time merchants, Information Technology employees and their supervisors to innovate and make things happen that we had not done before or even considered. When real-time merchants work from home, we improve their safety as well as the safety of those who still must work onsite. WAPA now has more than 1,200 employees working remotely.

Some utilities, maybe even your own, have asked their operators to sequester on extended shifts. We are working on a plan for our operators, should it be necessary. This plan requires coordination at the highest levels of the Department of Energy to ensure our people will be safe, provided for and appropriately compensated for sequestering.

To be clear, we have not made a decision on sequestration, but we need to prepare for its potential implementation long before we actually sequester. Much coordination and purchasing needs to occur before we make the decision, including having a place for dispatchers to live, food for to eat, adequate power supply and basic creature comforts, cleaning support and more. We have to be ready now with appropriate compensation and seek volunteers on a defined scheduled that will help them prepare.

DOE is providing funds to prepare for sequestration, but non-reimbursable funding is a discussion we continue to have with DOE every day for all COVID-19 activities.

I am also participating in the Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council and numerous other national-and state-sponsored meetings. The ESCC, in particular, has been extremely helpful in getting high-level attention for items such as personal protective equipment and testing.

WAPA also contributes to and confirms some of the industry's leading practices and a collective path forward. One of our most critical outcomes has been to have mission-essential electricity employees recognized as Level-1 service providers, meaning they would have the same priorities as hospital workers and law enforcement in terms of procuring PPE and test kits. We continue to work diligently with governors' offices across the U.S. to share our story and the criticality of our work to continued electrical service. We made a [video](#) to this effect, which we encourage you share with your local leaders.

We have a number of plans, dashboards and other documents that have been developed over the course of this pandemic. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and North American Electric Reliability Corporation have shared WAPA's Pandemic Plan across the country as a model template from which to begin. We are happy to share those with your organization. Reach out to us at COVID-19@wapa.gov to request any of these plans.

WAPA is here for you. We are looking to hear more from you about increasing communication and collaboration as we seek ways to assess your needs. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out and connect. In this time of social distancing, it is more important to connect than ever before.

Stay safe. Stay well. Stay in touch.

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