

Date: Sep. 2, 3:15 p.m.

iNote Subject: Message from the CEO

Employees,

The past several months have been exhausting in their repetition of unwelcome new requirements: quarantining, practicing social distancing, technical difficulties with WebEx and Zoom, and yes, wearing face coverings. I am as tired of all this as you are, and I know we are all eagerly looking forward to more normalcy.

But that time is not yet here, so we cannot relax our efforts to stay healthy. The daily number of reported new cases and other COVID-19 measures have improved compared to a couple of months ago, but several of those measures are trending up again – and South Carolina still has a percent-positive-test rate three times the national average! With schools now reopening, public health experts are watching closely for potential hot spots developing – such as the surge in new cases reported among students at the University of South Carolina the past week.

The good news is this: Santee Cooper's efforts to limit the spread of the new coronavirus are working. Occupational Safety and Health has issued nearly 500 employee quarantines since March, keeping employees away from work for several days who'd been around family or friends confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19, and so far just 36 of our employees and 2 contractors have tested positive for the virus. We have no evidence of any worker-to-worker spread, which is a tremendous accomplishment. So please keep doing what you're doing – stay home when you feel sick, wear a face covering, practice social distancing, work from home if you can, and practice good hygiene. Santee Cooper will keep up its guard too, performing entrance wellness checks, requiring face coverings in all common areas and where social distancing isn't possible, limiting capacity in meeting rooms, increasing our cleaning regimens and providing you updated information to help you protect yourself and your family. We remain in Phase One of our "[Return to Work](#)" plan.

We are also hearing good news on both vaccine development and new testing options. In fact, Santee Cooper is working to finalize a deal with a South Carolina company that would potentially allow us to provide proactive saliva-based testing to employees in certain areas of the company, and also to receive test results more quickly. Although these are both signs of progress, we need to be prepared to continue in our current mode through the fall if necessary.

Many of you have asked when Santee Cooper will move to Phase 2. The Corporate Incident Management Team is following the COVID-19 numbers and comparing them to our targets in five key areas, and here is where we stand as of yesterday.

- New COVID-19 cases reported daily in South Carolina: the target is fewer than 10 per 100,000 residents (currently that state figure is too high at 16.6 per 100,000);
- Rate of transmission: the target is less than 1 (currently the state figure is too high at just over 1)
- Seven-day average of tests with positive results: the target is less than 5% (currently the state figure is too high at 18.3%)

- Status of hospital ICU units: the target is less than 60% full (currently ICUs are 37% full, so we're good on this measure)
- Contact tracer hiring in state: the target is greater than 10% (currently the state figure is 17%, so we're good on this measure)

We will continue to monitor these metrics and only move to Phase 2 when it makes sense to do so. Thank you for doing your part to help us get there, and please continue to follow our protocols at work and at home. As Santee Cooper employees, you distinguish yourselves every day for your commitment to do the right thing. Enjoy this upcoming holiday weekend as best you can in these very different times.

Thank you,

Mark