

Heber Public Utility District Report to the Board of Directors

MEETING DATE: June 11, 2020

FROM: Laura Fischer, General Manager

SUBJECT: Items related to the California Department of Public health concerns and Governor Newsom's Executive Order enhancing State and Local government's ability to respond to COVID-19 pandemic.

ISSUE:

The nation is facing a national health emergency. The State and Federal government have declared a state of emergency. There was a Declaration of Local Health Emergency issued by the Health Officer, and a Proclamation of Local Emergency issued by the County Director of Emergency Services on March 5, 2020. The Governor signed the Proclamation of State Emergency on March 4, 2020 and followed with Executive Orders N-25-20; N-27-20 and N-28-20 on March 16, 2020. And Proclamation 9984 was issued by the President of the United States on March 11, 2020.

There are new health regulations and guidelines coming from the CDC, WHO and other health regulating agencies, as well as the Governor's office daily. HPUD management is monitoring the changing regulations and guidelines and we have taken several steps to continue to follow the health protocol.

In California the state is entering into Phase 3 of reopening while the number of cases in the Imperial County are increasing. Governor Newsome says that regional variance is the driver for counties to move further into phase 3 to reopen their local economics.

Imperial County is currently in stage 2: Lower-Risk Workplaces are gradually opening with adaptation at a pace designed to protect public health and safety and HPUD employees. We are not opening the doors of our office, but all office staff will be back to full work schedule starting June 15th. All Operators and parks employees will be back full work schedule starting June 15th.

Safety measures are in place and a memo has been sent to each employee. Every employee has a record of their temperature and has acknowledged the protocol should they feel sick or have a high temperature.

As of June 8, these are the number of COVID cases for Imperial County and Heber.

Imperial County:	Total Positive Cases 2,568
	Active Cases 975
	Deaths 33

Heber 92249	Total Positive Cases 103 –
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Heber has 10.5% of the total positive cases in the Imperial County.

The COVID – 19 pandemic is constantly evolving and the HPUD Board of Directors has authorized the General Manager to comply with regulations, mandates, and guidelines as they are made public, and to make any changes as may be necessary to HPUD operations in all departments to ensure continued services and protect the health and safety of our employees and the good citizens of Heber.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Fischer, General Manager

Attachment: Employee Memo

Heber Public Utility District
Office of the General Manager

INTEROFFICE
MEMORANDUM

Date: May 22, 2020

To: HPUD Employees

From: Laura Fischer, General Manager

Re: Prevention Practices Related to the COVID -19 Pandemic

The Heber Public Utility District is monitoring the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The information and guidance for employees is changing with the possibility of relaxing social distancing guidelines while still preventing workplace exposures in our industry.

The Heber Public Utility District will continue to employ the following strategies to protect the health of our employees and the people of Heber:

Current Practice and Policy

Every employee has a role to play to protect yourself and your family. These practices should be followed at work and at home.

- Wash hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover a cough or sneeze with your sleeve, or disposable tissue. Wash your hands afterward.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay away from work, school or other people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and cough.
- When at work always wear personal protective equipment such as gloves when handling items not sanitized.

HPUD has implemented the following rules as we follow guidelines from public health officials including adherence to Social Distancing at work. These rules will continue until the State and County meet the criteria established by Governor Newsom.

- Only one HPUD employee or person in vehicle at a time.
- Clean and sanitize your touch spaces in your vehicle, desk and public areas after every use or daily. This includes door handles, steering wheel, seats, tool boxes and other high touch areas.
- Work alone at your task unless there is an emergency requiring additional personnel to assist you. Your supervisor will assign you tasks that can be done alone or under visual supervision from at least six (6') feet away.

- Eat your meals alone or with at minimum six (6) feet between yourself and the person in the room with you. Keep your distance from your coworkers and others.
- Avoid direct physical contact, such as hand-shaking, holding hands, and hugging.
- Field personnel will not be allowed past the door/window in the HPUD office unless they have a physical necessity to be present. Just talk to each other through the glass, pass papers through the glass and wear gloves.
- We will not receive payments in the office starting March 18th. All payments must be made online, in the drop off mail boxes, or over the phone.

WORK HOUR - RETURN TO FULL DUTY PLAN

The General Manager will determine when to implement a return to work policy. The HPUD Board will approve the phased in return to work policy. The phased in return to work policy will mirror the Executive Orders of the Governor and County of Imperial.

Phased Approach to Return to Work:

Work Load Assessment:

The Chief Operator has identified projects that are critical to the operation of the water and sewer plants and has determined that only operations and projects that can be completed by either one employee or more than one employee following social distancing rules will be assigned. Any work assignment with more than one employee will be monitored to ensure the employees are wearing PPE and following social distancing rules and policies listed above.

Work Assignment: Once it has been determined to be safe to return to full staff, employees must report to work and get assignments that encourage the social distancing. Employees will be assigned by the Chief Operator and General Manger.

Employee Training:

Starting Friday, May 29th staff will receive training on the following safety protocol.

- Information on COVID-19, how to prevent it from spreading, and which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting the virus.
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and/or symptom checks using CDC guidelines.
- The importance of not coming to work if employees have a frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, or if they or someone they live with have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- To seek medical attention if their symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on CDC's webpage.

- The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water, including scrubbing with soap for 20 seconds (or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol when employees cannot get to a sink or handwashing station, per CDC guidelines).
- The importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time (see Physical Distancing section below).
- Proper use of face coverings, including:
 - Face coverings do not protect the wearer and are not personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
 - Employees should wash or sanitize hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Face coverings should be washed after each shift.

Safety Precautions at Work Sites:

Beginning on Friday, May 29th, the following Safety Precautions will be in place:

- HPUD will provide temperature and/or symptom screenings for all workers at the beginning of their shift and any vendors, contractors, or other workers entering the establishment. A thermometer will be provided and employees will be trained on how to use it and clean it. Employees will write their temperature down on the form provided by HPUD.
- HPUD encourages workers who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home.
- All HPUD employees will be provided face coverings which must be worn when employees are in the vicinity of others. Workers should have face coverings available and wear them when at work, in offices, or in a vehicle during work-related travel. Face coverings must not be shared.
- Work hours and breaks will be staggered so that only two employees are in the break room at the same time. Some employees need to clock in earlier/later than others to ensure minimal contact. The Chief Operator will assign work hours so that employees can clock in/out, have a break and lunch with only one other employee in the break room, locker room and kitchen.
- HPUD employees will perform thorough cleaning on high traffic areas such as break rooms and lunch areas, and areas of ingress and egress. Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces including doorknobs, toilets, and handwashing facilities.
- The Chief Operator and General Manager will provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shift. Cleaning assignments will be assigned during working hours as part of the employee's job duties.
- Management will adjust or modify hours to provide adequate time for regular thorough cleaning and disinfection of office spaces.
- Employees must avoid sharing phones, other work supplies, or office equipment wherever possible. Never share PPE.

- Where such items must be shared, disinfect between shifts or uses, whichever is more frequent, including the following: shared office equipment such as copiers, fax machines, printers, telephones,

Continued Communications:

HPUD will continue to communicate both within the District and with our customers and public health officials to ensure clear understanding that the water provided is safe and suitable for drinking, cooking, bathing and all other potable uses. The CDC and the California Department of Public Health are the primary source for public health information.

Local COVID 19 cases can be monitored on the County of Imperial website COVID dashboard.

HPUD staff will communicate with our customers via notices on our website, and newsletters mailed to each customer.

Should you have questions, please give me a call at 760-336-1572.