

Dear Co-op Members,

We are in week 2 of closed lobbies at RGEC offices, to comply with CDC recommendations for social distancing. Rio Grande is doing our part to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. At this juncture, we don't know exactly how long it will be until things get back to normal. I want to assure you that we are still open, and employees are on the job, working to serve you.

Some employees are working remotely through the use of technology, and the rest are dispersed among the offices, in order to keep at a safe distance from one another. These measures were implemented to ensure Rio Grande employees can remain healthy, in order to continue to serve your needs.

Though we miss seeing you face-to-face while lobbies are closed, we are still maintaining regular business hours and are able to assist you through other means of communications, such as SmartHub, the Secure Pay Phone System, e-mails to the Customer Service Representatives at each area office, and by phone. We encourage you to conduct business electronically, if possible, in order to leave phone lines free, in the event of outages. Remember that you can also report outages via Facebook, and Dispatch responds 24/7. As always, please provide your meter number – regardless of how you report an outage.

Our supply lines are still open, and we are able to get the materials and equipment we need to keep your power on. Linemen are still on the job, and responding to outages. As Critical Infrastructure Workers, RGEC employees are exempt from the orders to stay at home, which are in place in many of our counties. In order that they not meet with resistance from enforcement authorities, we have provided them each with an official letter stating they are Critical Infrastructure Workers.

Many of you are accustomed to checking in with the linemen when you see them working, and some even offer them food or water. Just as a precautionary measure during this pandemic, we ask that you give them a "rain check" on the handshakes, food, water, and other friendly gestures. We'll gladly settle for a wave of the hand for now, and resume all these things when the danger has passed.

Some people have been laid off from jobs, or have had to take unpaid leave during this pandemic. We are aware of this, and know that you may be stressing over how to manage bills. If you need additional time to pay your electric bill, please contact your area office before the bill becomes due, and we will work with you.

We have compiled a COVID-19 Information Sheet, which contains all of the counties in the RGEC service territory, and will work on getting that up on the website ([www.riogrande.coop/COVID](http://www.riogrande.coop/COVID)) shortly, so that you can stay informed, as to the spread of the disease, and any particular local/state ordinances pertaining to it. It is updated daily, and new figures should be available by approximately 1:00 p.m. (Central) each day.

Please continue to check our social media pages for updates. In addition to Facebook, we are now on Instagram (@riograndecoop) and Twitter (@riograndecoop).

The importance of cooperation is underscored during these difficult times, and I am certain that we will come through this crisis stronger and better human beings.

God bless you,

Roger Andrade, CEO