

## **COVID-19 Management**

Without a doubt, this year brought significant challenges to the health and safety of our employees. On February 28, 2020, the organization held its first national COVID-19 response meeting with more than 35 people representing all of the utilities. At the local level, Emergency Operations Centers were opened immediately to focus on meeting the unique needs of each state. We created a Threat Level Management Team (TLMT) from four states' operations, to align decisions regarding COVID-19 issues. The TLMT stayed focused on three guiding pillars: protect employees, protect public health, and live our core values.

### *New Protocol*

Our first actions were to halt all non-essential services, implement company-wide remote work for our office employees, and dispatch field service employees from home to minimize interactions. As the pandemic and knowledge of the virus evolved, guidance protocols were developed and revised with a focus on cleaning and disinfection of facilities, vehicles, and tools; implementing social distancing; and wearing face coverings at jobsites to limit the transmission of the virus. For jobs which require working within six feet of one another, additional controls were added such as increased ventilation, minimized contact time, and wearing N95 masks.

To ensure interim guidance was followed, a comprehensive training program was implemented. We also sought feedback from the field staff to confirm that these protocols were effective and being followed. To identify and provide a timely response to possible presumed or confirmed COVID-19 cases, SJW Group developed an employee contact tracing tool to easily identify employees who were in close contact with a positive case. The tool enables us to identify exposed individuals and isolate them to eliminate further transmission of the virus. Furthermore, identifying the exposed work locations continues to allow us to perform additional deep cleaning and disinfection of facilities and vehicles where the employee was present.

The team also developed the Work Assessment and Task Evaluation Review (WATER) assessment to determine the risks associated with various field tasks, and whether those risks could be mitigated by adapting procedures and/or personal protective equipment (PPE). Only when we had fully evaluated the risks of specific field work tasks and implemented effective procedures, policies, and proper protective equipment were those tasks resumed. The WATER assessment started with the most critical jobs needed for delivering a reliable supply of safe water to customers. In all, more than 78 tasks have been evaluated.

### *Contractor & Public Health Prevention Measures*

We worked closely with contractors to coordinate efforts to lower the transmission of COVID-19 among our jobsites and locations. Every contractor was required to submit a COVID-19 Safety Plan to SJW Group for review. In addition to the local construction mandates, we are continuing to use additional interim guidance protocols for large and small construction safety plans.

We also implemented several protocols to protect public health on our jobsites. This included clearly marking our jobsites, posting signage, recording a log of visitors, and reporting positive cases to the Public Health Department within four hours of being informed. Additional controls were required upon entry of a jobsite such as confirming self-certification, being free of COVID-19 symptoms, maintaining social distancing at all times, and maintaining cleaning and disinfection protocols.

### *Remote Employee Support*

Providing a safe work environment for employees working from home remains a priority. The team performed virtual ergonomic office assessments to protect employees from injury, and provisions were made for employees to retrieve office furniture on a scheduled basis.

A “Work from Home” survey was also conducted in early summer 2020 to learn how the company could best support our staff. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we recognized that stress levels among our employees can vary. The results reflected that:

- Most people are comfortable working remotely and have what they need to do their job. Many expressed an interest in long-term remote work arrangements
- Employees want to be kept informed about the company’s timeline to return to our offices
- Unprecedented uncertainty in our lives is causing a great deal of stress to employees, including school/distance learning, eldercare, and the longevity of all the precautions
- COVID-19 fatigue and social isolation are also concerns expressed by some employees

Concerns shared in the “Work from Home” survey led to direct action by executive leadership to improve communication around return-to-work updates, train supervisors on identifying and responding to employee mental health concerns, and provide employees with additional wellness resources.