



March 26, 2020

SERC Region Responds to NERC Alert

FROM THE DESK OF: Bill Peterson, Manager, Outreach and Training

**TO: Primary and Alternate Compliance Contacts
Technical Committee Members**

On March 10, 2020, NERC issued a Level 2 NERC Alert, [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Pandemic Contingency Planning](#). The alert listed six recommended actions: develop and maintain good situational awareness of COVID-19 exposure; reinforce good personal hygiene practices; review and update business continuity plans; assess resiliency against disruptions; reassess outage schedules and adjust plans accordingly; and anticipate and prepare for opportunistic social engineering attacks.

SERC was very encouraged that all SERC entities fulfilled all obligations to the Level 2 Alert and provided excellent information and responses to the alert. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the reliability and security of the grid.

SERC has reviewed these responses and has been closely monitoring the recent events in close collaboration with its stakeholders. This has enabled us to develop a list of good practices for your awareness. (Please keep in mind that some items may be more or less applicable to your operations, based on your size and/or structure.)

Control Center

1. Limit entry to Control Centers to essential employees (i.e., System Operators, EMS support staff, etc.). Carefully consider what management staff are essential to daily operations. Phones and emails can help reduce exposure of essential staff.
2. Remove extra furniture and/or electronics from Control Centers in order to reduce the potential for contamination. This, in turn, reduces the quantity of items that will need to be sanitized. However, keeping a small backup supply that is sanitized and ready for use is still a good idea in case there are issues with equipment.
3. Where possible, split crews between primary and back-up Control Centers to create more social distancing between System Operators and reduce the potential for exposure. Also, consider alternating which desk is covered at each control center so that shift change is virtual.
4. Consider moving to a 12-hour shift to reduce exposure by reducing shift changes.
5. Implement regular sanitization steps between shift change and periodically throughout the day. Include kitchens, breakrooms, and restrooms in the process.
6. Require System Operators or other essential staff entering the Control Center to sanitize prior to entering.

Field Personnel

1. Split field crews into separate vehicles where possible to reduce exposure.

2. Implement regular sanitization steps before field crew enter vehicles and periodically throughout the day. Any shared control houses, kitchens, breakrooms, and restrooms should be sanitized periodically to limit exposure.
3. Require field personnel to sanitize, use personal protective equipment (PPE) where needed, and maintain social distancing when working on teams in the field.
4. Limit crews to essential staff where possible.

Please be safe and maintain safe personal distancing in your work and personal life. This is a difficult time but we will get through it together while maintaining reliability to the essential service our industry provides to the general public, hospitals, and other critical facilities.

If you have questions please contact Hassan Hamdar or SERC Support.

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