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6 People Test Positive For Covid-19 at Limetree Bay; Company Announces New Stringent Protocols

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A view of the Limetree Bay Mancamp where contract workers are housed, along with a view of the refinery and terminal. By. ERNICE GILBERT FOR VI CONSORTIUM

Limetree Bay executive management team on Thursday confirmed that five people working at the facility and one newly arrived contractor recently tested positive for Covid-19 (Coronavirus 2019). Limetree Bay President and CEO, Brian Lever, said the safety and health of the facility's workers continue to be a top priority, and he reaffirmed the company's commitment to preventing the spread of the virulent virus on facility grounds.

To that end, Limetree Bay officials announced adjustments to the company's protocols for contractor personnel returning to the facility after traveling. The new procedures call for all

contractor personnel to be tested before arriving on St. Croix and then isolate for 72 hours after arrival, before being tested again for the COVID-19 virus. Limetree said it has tested all contractor personnel who traveled to the island since May 2020, prior to their release to work. In addition, Limetree is offering Covid-19 testing at no cost to family members of employees who are returning to St. Croix.

“We have seen a significant spike in cases across the country, and we recognize that the potential for exposure to Covid-19 is much greater now that restrictions on travel and socializing are easing nationwide,” said Mr. Lever. “In response, we have ramped up our protocols to include broader testing of individuals outside of those who travel to St. Croix, deep sanitization of common areas daily, and implementing a mandatory facial covering requirement.”

Existing protocols in place include:

- Testing of all off-island arrivals
- Temperature screening at all entry points
- Social distancing requirement within vehicles and facility
- Increased sanitization schedules throughout the facility daily
- Mandatory facial covering requirement within six feet of another person
- Isolation and quarantine wings available
- Weekly reporting of all contractors travelling to St. Croix and test results to the Department of Health

Since the pandemic started Limetree Bay said it has taken prudent steps to limit the spread of the virus, including the following:

- 1) Over 1,400 COVID-19 tests administered (including both ProHealth and in the U.S. mainland).
 - a. 100% of contractor travelers tested since May 1, 2020
 - b. All testing conducted at private facilities at Limetree Bay’s cost so as not to burden the public health department
 - c. Multiple tests administered to many individuals (both rapid and PCR) to improve the confidence in the results
 - d. More than 300,000 temperature screens (daily screenings for 100% of the people entering facility since April)
- 2) Immediate isolation and quarantine through “contact tracing” with subsequent COVID-19 testing of individuals who may have come in contact with persons under investigation
- 3) Immediate quarantine for anyone exhibiting symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19
- 3) Stopped all contractor travel to the USVI for six weeks, and have subsequently restricted travel
- 3) Implemented full policies and procedures for social distancing, additional cleaning, and personal protective equipment

"As a result of the steps taken we have limited the spread of the virus within the site and the Limetree Village," Mr. Lever said.

The firm said it continues to work with the V.I. Department of Health to ensure that the protocols being implemented will help to mitigate any possible spread of the virus within the facility, as well as to the community, and to provide reporting requirements as needed.

