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**SANTEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS**

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## SEC's 2020 Annual Meeting canceled



**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,** I never thought I would be writing a column such as this. However, it must be said.

Santee Electric Cooperative is postponing indefinitely its 2020 Annual Meeting of the Membership. The meeting was to take place on April 14. In fact, I had already submitted another—very different—version of this column remarking how excited I was to have an opportunity to see all of you again this spring.

That, obviously, is not going to happen now. With all of the warnings and urging from the state Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the President, and the Governor regarding the new coronavirus, there is no way we could hold a gathering like our Annual Meeting. Putting over 4,000 people in one location in a single afternoon would be careless and dangerous.

The obvious question is—When WILL we have the meeting? The truth is that I do not know. I am hopeful that we may be able to reschedule something for this summer or the coming fall. However, until we—as a country—are able to get this virus under control, we do not know when we will be able to return to what we see as normal life.

As is the case with many of you, my children are having school at home and all of their ballgames have been canceled. While I cherish this extra time with them, the truth is that this virus is robbing them of valuable experiences. That's just one of a thousand examples in which our lives are being interrupted.

In this difficult time, I would like to ask for three things from you.

First, please heed the advice we have all been given. Practice the social distancing and extra hygiene that we hear so much about right now. Normally, things are better when we come together; but for now, the best thing for our country is for her people to separate until we can get a handle on this virus.

Second, as long as it is practicable and safe, please support your local businesses. Times like these are very tough on them and their employees. For example, although dine-in options are suspended, as I am writing this column, many restaurants still have take-out, drive-through, and delivery options. Please utilize them as much as you can. Our economy needs you.

Finally—but most important—I ask you to pray. Pray for the government officials making critical decisions on a daily basis. Pray for the medical professionals that are putting themselves in harm's way to provide critical services. Pray for our people.

You have heard a great deal to the effect of, "What we do in the next 15 days will make a tremendous amount of difference." As I am writing this, that 15 days has just begun. When you read it, the 15 days will be past. You know more than I did when I wrote this. I pray today that you have good news tomorrow.

**ROBERT G. ARDIS III**

President and Chief Executive Officer