

Lightning during the COVID-19 storm

April 29, 2020

It may look like it's been "business as usual" here at Lightning, with our [recent order announcements](#), but - just like everyone else - we've been living life very differently during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We're regarded as an essential business because we're producing and maintaining vehicles which are used by hospitals, delivery services and other businesses that need to keep their doors open and their vehicles on the roads. This means that most of our production staff are still on the job, following CDC guidelines for social-distancing, hand hygiene, and face coverings. However, most of the rest of us have been working from home, which has worked quite well. The result is that we're happy to say that there have been zero cases of COVID-19 at Lightning Systems.

Just like us, our customers have had to respond and adapt. [Freebee](#), a company in Miami that provides free, on-demand transit services, has reassigned its Lightning Electric passenger vans to supporting the health services and delivering groceries. (As it happens, we have a webinar coming up on May 6th where we talk with Freebee about fleet electrification and adapting to the pandemic. [Register here.](#))

Other customers have had to reassess their priorities, so we've seen a softening of the passenger shuttle market, while delivery and logistics companies are still moving ahead with electrifying their fleets. As I'm writing, new purchase orders are coming in from this sector.

Now that Jared Polis, the governor of Colorado, has announced a slight easing of restrictions, our people are heading back into the office. As Colorado slowly eases restrictions and returns to work, we will continue to maintain the safety and health of our employees while following state health protocols and practices.

As the world learns more about the coronavirus, and as scientists publish studies on all its aspects, one finding that caught our attention is that the likelihood of dying from COVID-19 infection is [strongly linked to regional air quality](#). In regions with high "PM 2.5" pollution, which is the microscopic particles produced by combustion and other industrial activities, people's lungs are constantly being irritated and even damaged. This leads to respiratory problems at the best of times; but when lungs are attacked by the COVID-19 virus, mortality rates are significantly higher. Even a slight increase in long-term pollution exposure could have serious coronavirus-related consequences.

When the world recovers from COVID-19, fossil fuel use will no doubt bounce back, and the [clean air we've been enjoying recently](#) will revert to its former dirty state as economies ramp up their activities just to survive. However, I think two things will be different going forward. First, the world-wide taste of clean air will have long-lasting political and social effects which will favor clean energy over fossil fuels; and secondly, market trends which are leading to a decrease in investment in fossil fuels, with coal being the leading example at this time, will accelerate.

At Lightning, we're all about clean, renewable energy, because our electric vehicles can only truly be emissions-free if the electricity that powers them is generated with clean energy. The sooner that day comes, the better everyone's health will be.

Stay healthy out there.



The view looking south-west from our campus in Loveland, CO