



For Immediate Release

October 26, 2020

ROUTE 66 CASINO HOTEL TEMPORARILY CLOSED

(Laguna, New Mexico) – Laguna Development Corporation (LDC), the primary business entity for the Pueblo of Laguna, has announced the temporary closure of Route 66 Casino Hotel (Route 66) for at least two weeks. The closure became effective on Sunday October 25th at 5 p.m. MT.

The decision to cease operations came about as a result of 13 positive test results for coronavirus amongst Route 66 employees that were received over the weekend as a result of contact tracing. All LDC employees have been undergoing mandatory testing since the company resumed reduced operations at Route 66 on June 24, 2020. Between late June and October 22, only eight positive employee cases were detected and all cases were traced to exposure outside the business. The most recent cases were also due to exposure outside of work.

LDC employees were notified of the closure yesterday evening. The employees were informed their pay and benefits will remain intact during the two-week closure. All Route 66 employees will be re-tested for the virus over the next several days and are being asked to self-quarantine pending the test results.

According to LDC President and CEO Maxine Velasquez, “As part of regular, ongoing consultation with Pueblo of Laguna Governor Wilfred Herrera and the Pueblo’s Emergency Operations Command, LDC and the Pueblo jointly agreed to close the casino, hotel and restaurants to protect the health and safety of our employees, guests and the Laguna community. The increases in virus infections throughout New Mexico and the increase we saw as a result of mandatory employee testing this past week, encouraged us to exercise an abundance of caution to close down operations. We will thoroughly sanitize and clean the entire Route 66 facility during the closure. We will also remind every employee, their family and friends to demonstrate COVID Safe Practices at home and at work. None of us can let our guard down.”

Pueblo of Laguna Governor Wilfred Herrera said, “LDC has done an extraordinary job of adhering to the health and safety protocols over the last four months of reduced operations. That is why our positive cases have remained low. However, infections in the region are flaring and our top priority remains protecting the health of our community and doing our part to minimize the spread of the virus. The Pueblo will continue to work with LDC and other public health agencies to do everything we possibly can to minimize the impact of this pandemic on our employees, guests and Laguna Pueblo.”

LDC also announced the Route 66 Travel Centers on Interstate 40 at Exits 108 and 140 will remain open. The Route 66 RV Resort, the Marketplace at Dancing Eagle as well as convenience stores, gas stations and Laguna Burger Restaurants will remain open with all health and safety protocols and reduced levels of operations in place.

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About LDC

Laguna Development Corporation has had a remarkable history of successful business ventures in the State of New Mexico since its inception in 1998, when LDC embarked on a journey towards securing a solid future for the Pueblo of Laguna. Starting out in the retail market, LDC quickly moved to gaming, food and beverage, entertainment and hospitality; mastering each over the course of the next ten years. With a solid management team in place, proven financial strength, a stable business environment, entrepreneurial growth strategy and the trust of its shareholder's, LDC is committed to seeking opportunities to elevate the levels of success already achieved.

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