

E-mail to subscribers of the *Sackville Tribune-Post* from Mark Lever, President and CEO of the SaltWire Network.

Good morning,

This message is coming to you while we remain in the midst of the most unprecedented time of our recent history. On March 25, SaltWire took immediate actions to protect the viability of our business and the long-term employment of our staff. These decisions were in response to a sudden and dramatic loss of advertising revenue and extreme uncertainty about the impact of COVID-19.

We suspended publication of several subscriber-based and free newspapers and laid off staff. Our readers and clients understood the necessity of suspending products, which could not continue without support from local businesses. We did our best to communicate the changes and we appreciate the support we got from you along the way.

As the world quickly changed around us, our staff remained focused on providing critical information and stories to our readers. During one of the toughest news periods of our lifetimes, and as our hearts broke from back-to-back tragedies so close to home, it became clear that local journalism has never been more important or relevant; we saw more readers than ever before.

So where are we now? Like many businesses, we are optimistic but cautious. Our advertising revenue and retail newspaper sales haven't rebounded to pre-COVID numbers. Given the state of the world, we know it will take some time. As a result, our business will have to look different than it did three months ago.

In terms of our suspended publications, our plan is to work in partnership with each of the communities we serve. In order to bring subscriber-based publications back, we need a minimum of 5,000 members and a business community that is ready to reach out to customers again. As businesses open-up and confidence returns to local markets we will work with communities to build sustainable publications.

Despite the ongoing challenges, we remain committed and passionate about keeping local journalism for our communities. We've brought back a number of journalists to ensure the important stories continue to be told. Their stories can be found online at SaltWire.com, in our daily newspapers and on local social media pages. Buying a membership is what keeps our journalists covering what our communities care about. To those who continue to support our mission of local journalism provoking thought and action for the betterment of our communities, thank you. We could not keep people informed and engaged on the topics that matter to all of us without your ongoing support.

Sincerely, Mark Lever, President and CEO

Note: The SaltWire Network owns 11 weekly newspapers in Nova Scotia, eight in Newfoundland and Labrador as well as the *Sackville Tribune-Post*. SaltWire also owns *The Chronicle-Herald* in Halifax, the *Cape Breton Post* in Sydney, the *Journal Pioneer*, in Summerside, *The Guardian* in Charlottetown and *The Telegram* in St. John's.

