

**For Release Tuesday 4/29/2020**

## **County of Berks / COVID-19 Leadership Team Alert**

*Berks County Continues to Seek PPE Supplies*

*In Critical Need of Isolation Gowns*

**Reading, PA— 4/29/2020** — Since mid-March, Berks County has been able to acquire some of the much-needed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies for local first responders through purchases and donations, but finding ways to continuously fulfill demands remains an issue, especially for isolation gowns.

### **The PPE supply in Berks County is a revolving door.**

Brian Gottschall, Director of the Berks County Department of Emergency Services (DES), has been monitoring the PPE supply for Berks County first responders and notes the turnaround for most items is stable for now. “Gear comes in and gear goes out,” Gottschall said. “We have no desire to become a warehouse. If we have a continuous supply that meets a continuous need, that’s the best scenario.”

*Gottschall said isolations gowns remain in critical need.* A cooperative purchase between Berks, Chester, and Montgomery counties is still on order, and will possibly remain so for another couple of weeks. Other counties are experiencing similar issues attempting to acquire gowns. Berks is looking into other options to get this material in.

### **Berks County receives a much-needed donation from 8 Oaks Farm Distillery.**

Along with other PPE materials, hand sanitizer was in short supply across Berks County. 8 Oaks Farm Distillery, located in New Tripoli, PA, recently donated 100 cases of hand sanitizer to Berks County DES to disperse among responders. Gottschall said the donation from 8 Oaks Distillery replenished the county’s almost non-existent supply and allowed Berks County DES to

get a reasonable allotment of individual dispenser sized units out to all emergency responders. 8  
Oaks has committed that additional refill sizes will follow.

Satisfying the high demand of PPE from emergency services personnel and other community responders is a top priority for Berks County. Efforts to get ahead of the demand remain a constant struggle as county officials look to alternate avenues to secure additional supplies.

**Here is the current status of PPE orders in Berks County.**

**Including to local hospitals, first responders and county agencies, we have secured and delivered (round numbers):**

- N95s and KN95s – 80,500
- Procedure Masks – 235,000
- Gowns – 700
- Face shields and goggles – 60,000

**Over 2 million pieces of gear remain on order for Berks County employees, hospitals and first responders.**

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