

Our Vision: Healthy People in Healthy Communities
Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties

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SHDHD Distributes Personal Protective Equipment for Front Line Workers

Hastings, Neb –South Heartland District Health Department (SHDHD) officials reported they received a large shipment of personal protective equipment (PPE) for distribution to health care and other front line workers assisting with the local COVID-19 response.

“We had a significant shipment of PPE that was purchased by the State of Nebraska and delivered to our health district on Saturday,” said Michele Bever, SHDHD executive director. “There have been periodic shipments of PPE from the State to our health district, since early March,” she said. “These helped to boost the local cache of supplies we distributed first, but this is the first large influx of supplies,” she said.

Bever said the supplies are prioritized for health care workers in hospitals and clinics, long-term care workers, emergency medical services, law enforcement, and other personnel who provide care for or may be exposed to COVID-19 infected individuals.

Jim Morgan, SHDHD’s public health risk coordinator, is responsible for coordinating the receipt and distribution of supplies. “The personal protective equipment shipments have included some combination of gloves, different types of masks, hand sanitizer, gowns, and other supplies,” he said.

“Local agencies in all four of our counties have been completing requests based on their needs, but we haven’t always been able to fill these requests. We have been receiving very limited supplies of some items, such as gowns, goggles and face shields,” Morgan said. “We are thankful for the local individuals who were able to design and produce face shields and get them to the people who needed them.”

Morgan said that Saturday’s shipment was important for filling requests from front line workers that need ongoing protection from exposure to COVID-19. “We know that there have been shortages of gowns across the state and this shipment is helping to make up for our local shortage. In this shipment, we received 8 pallets of supplies, including approximately 28,000 surgical gowns, 30,000 surgical masks, 3,000 N95 masks, 50,000 gloves, 350 infrared thermometers, and 200 gallons of hand sanitizer,” he said.

Morgan said these supplies are being distributed early this week to essential workforce in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster counties.

Morgan thanked Hastings Fire and Rescue, South Central Emergency Medical Services, Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps, Ron Pughes with Adams County Emergency Management and SHDHD staff member Liz Chamberlain for their assistance with inventory management and re-packaging of the supplies for distribution to 59 agencies across the four South Heartland counties. He also thanked Adams County Fairgrounds for providing a facility for the operation, Jim Chamberlain of Top Dog Machining LLC for providing and running a forklift, Allen’s of Hastings grocery store for providing bags for disseminating the PPE, and Hastings Menards for accepting the empty pallets.

“These individuals and organizations, along with the emergency managers in each county, were important partners in the distribution of this large shipment of supplies,” he said.

South Heartland District case counts by county are updated daily on SHDHD's COVID webpage: <https://southheartlandhealth.org/public-health-data/corona-virus.html>. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) provides daily updates to Nebraska's coronavirus COVID-19 cases on their Data Dashboard at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus>. ##