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Governor Bullock Announces System to Sanitize N95 Respirators for Health Care Workers

The Montana National Guard Army Aviation Support Facility will house the Battelle System to clean and disinfect respirators to ensure health care workers stay safe during national shortages of Personal Protective Equipment

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced the state received a Battelle Critical Care Decontamination System to begin cleaning and disinfecting used N95 respirators to ensure health care workers and first responders on the frontlines have the Personal Protective Equipment they need to safely treat patients.

"As N95 respirators continue to be in short supply across the country, Montana can start utilizing this new technology to make sure our health care workers and others on the frontlines don't go a single day without the equipment they need to protect themselves and their patients," Governor Bullock said. **"With help from the Montana National Guard, Battelle will work around the clock to get this system up and running and begin sanitizing tens of thousands of masks each day."**

As N95 respirators remain in high demand across the country and some orders have been delayed or cancelled, the Battelle system is another tool to provide Montana health care personnel with the protective equipment they need to stay healthy while treating patients.

The Battelle Critical Care Decontamination system is a self-contained, mobile decontamination unit that uses vapor phase hydrogen peroxide to decontaminate N95 filtering facepiece respirators from biological contaminants, including COVID-19.

The system can decontaminate 80,000 used N95 respirators per day and a single respirator can be reused up to 20 times without degradation.

All healthcare personnel are eligible for the N95 decontamination at no cost including emergency medical service personnel, nurses, nursing assistants, physicians, technicians, therapists, phlebotomists, pharmacists, dentists and dental hygienists, students and trainees, contractual staff not employed by the healthcare facility, and persons not directly involved in patient care, but who could be exposed to infectious agents that can be transmitted in the healthcare setting (e.g., clerical, dietary, environmental services, laundry, security, engineering and facilities management, administrative, billing, and volunteer personnel). Additionally, non-medical personnel participating in an emergency response due to COVID-19 also qualify as a healthcare professional under the Battelle Emergency Use Authorization.

How to sign up:

- To get N95 respirators cleaned, health care providers must first fill out an enrollment form at battelle.org/decon.
- Battelle will return an email with links to the enrollment contract, instructions and the Battelle point of contact.
- The enrollee will be given a three-digit code, which must be written on the respirators with permanent marker.
- The respirators need to be unsoiled, free of blood, mucus, makeup, lip balm, etc. Place all masks into a single plastic bag and tie off the bag when it is full. Any soiled masks will be thrown out. The bag must be placed into a second plastic bag that should be wiped down with disinfectant.
- Follow these instructions for how to prepare and collect used N95 respirators for decontamination.
- The respirators must be placed into a shipping box and labeled with the three-digit code and a biohazard sticker.
- The enrollee contacts a shipper to coordinate pickup and delivery.

Health care workers can start saving their N95 respirators to be contaminated and visit battelle.org/decon to sign up and start the process to submit respirators to be sanitized.

The Montana National Guard will assist Battelle in operating the system and will return it to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services when it's no longer needed.

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