

Email Sent with the Guidance Information on N-95 Respirator Disinfection in Your Region.

Hello All,

You are being contacted as a key connection to respiratory protection users in Vermont.

The State has delivered the final four of eight Steris V-Pro sterilizers to hospitals across the state. We need your help again to distribute the attached document to all of your contacts in the Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Police Forces, Fire Departments, Skilled Nursing Facilities, Long Term Care Facilities, Residential Treatment Facilities, Mental Health Facilities, Dental Offices, Elder Care Facilities, Correctional Facilities, Visiting Nurses, and Home Health Aides Community.

It is even more critical for all of our respirator users to sterilize and recycle their N-95 respirators. We do not have supplies available for months, and even then orders may only be partially filled. Reuse is one of our key strategies for maintaining an adequate supply of these critical elements personal protective equipment. **This needs to be factored into plans for new respirator users – they must be fit tested to respirators where there is actually an adequate supply.**

More information about N-95 supply shortage strategies should be sent to you to pass through to respirator users today or tomorrow.

Thank you for your help in this endeavor.

Bill

William Irwin, Sc.D.

State Emergency Operations Center

Vermont Department of Health Partner Representative

William Irwin, ScD, CHP | Radiological Sciences Chief | 802-316-0119 (M) | 802-250-3592 (P)

Guidance to Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Police Forces, Fire Departments, Skilled Nursing Facilities, Long Term Care Facilities, Residential Treatment Facilities, Mental Health Facilities, Dental Offices, Elder Care Facilities, Correctional Facilities, Visiting Nurses, and Home Health Aides on

N-95 Respirator Disinfection in Your Region

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) has provided seven hospitals with Steris V-Pro low temperature hydrogen peroxide sterilizing units. These units are typically used for sterilizing other medical devices but were recently granted an Emergency Use Authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to sterilize certain N-95 respirators.

The seven hospitals in Vermont have received these units and will provide N-95 sterilization services for you during the COVID-19 Response. The seven hospitals with points of contact are:

- University of Vermont Medical Center
 - Drew Robinson; Andrew.Robinson@uvmhealth.org; 802-847-4258
- Southwestern Vermont Medical Center
 - Joy Bull; Joy.Bull@svhealthcare.org; 802-440-8927
 - Tanya Cowder; Tanya.Cowder@svhealthcare.org; 802-442-6361
- Brattleboro Memorial Hospital
 - Mike Geissler; mgeissler@bmvht.org; 802-257-8288
- Springfield Hospital
 - Jim Smith; JimSmith@springfieldmed.org; 802-885-7651
- Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital
 - Pete Tomczyk; p.tomczyk@nvrh.org; 802-748-7348
- Rutland Regional Medical Center
 - Brian Olsen; bolsen@rrmc.org 802-747-3647
- North Country Regional Hospital
 - Michael Sanville; msanville@nchsi.org; 802-334-3270

While other hospitals may have similar sterilizer capabilities, they are not obligated to sterilize outside agency N-95 respirators like this, though they may choose to do so independently.

You should reach out to your region's hospital from the above list soon to discuss. Email may be better to reduce the impact. ***They will have requirements that must be met as you package your respirators for sterilization for you.*** We have asked them to diligently work with you during the COVID-19 Response for N-95 respirator sterilization. After COVID-19 Response ends, this obligation to sterilize for you will end, too.

Respirator Sterilization Processing

Respirators for sterilization must be very clean – **no writing, no lipstick or other makeup**. Steris states their system can effectively decontaminate compatible N95 or N95-equivalent respirators (those that do not contain cellulose) up to 10 times. The tested and acceptable respirator types to date include the 3M 8000, 8210, 1860, 1860S, 1870P and Moldex 1510Z, 1511, 1512, 1513, 1517, but more models may have been tested as well.

Discard soiled or damaged respirators in accordance with normal procedures – if in doubt, throw it out; **keep only used respirators that are in good condition**. The sterilizing facility may not return all of your respirators if they deem they are too soiled for sterilization or damaged for reuse. N-95 sterilization may occur a finite number of times.

Manage used, unsterilized respirators for disinfection as biohazardous materials. They must be packaged in accordance with OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard and transported in accordance with applicable US DOT regulations. It is hoped that local licensed biosafety transportation in accordance with DOT regulations can be arranged by you and the hospital, but the State can help with this during COVID-19 Response by calling the SEOC call takers at 800-347-0488.

Put used respirators together into a biohazard labeled plastic bag, line a box with a large plastic bag and put the bagged respirators into the bag lining the biohazard labeled cardboard box. The box should be labeled with the facility name and point of contact.

Please recall that N-95 respirator usage has three regulatory requirements for each user before use: medical evaluation for safety purposes, respirator training on safe usage, and fit-testing to ensure the size and type respirator affords protection for the individual. There are resources for each available locally and through the SEOC during the COVID-19 Response.

Should you have any questions that cannot be answered working locally, please contact the SEOC call takers at 800-347-0488.

Thank you for all you have done and are doing for the COVID-19 Response.

Vermont State Emergency Operations Center