

Lockington, Elliott (SPAC/PSPC)

From: Mullan-Boudreau, Caitlin (SPAC/PSPC)
Sent: March 27, 2020 12:54 PM
To: Murdock, Kelly (SPAC/PSPC)
Subject: FW: Quebec firm's reusable protective gear could ease shortage (Marco Chown Oved, Toronto Star)

Flagging

From: O'Neill, Sean Matthew (IC)
Sent: March 27, 2020 12:51 PM
To: Mullan-Boudreau, Caitlin (SPAC/PSPC) <caitlin.mullan-boudreau@canada.ca>
Subject: FW: Quebec firm's reusable protective gear could ease shortage (Marco Chown Oved, Toronto Star)

Hi Caitlin

One more for you, with a note from Marco from our Policy Team – let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Sean

From: Chan, Marco (IC) <marco.chan@canada.ca>
Sent: March 27, 2020 10:00 AM
To: O'Neill, Sean Matthew (IC) <seanmatthew.oneill@canada.ca>
Cc: Caira, Celine (IC) <celine.caira@canada.ca>
Subject: FW: Quebec firm's reusable protective gear could ease shortage (Marco Chown Oved, Toronto Star)

Hi Sean,

This seems like an interesting lead to send to PSPC Ops – GCI in QC makes reusable PPE. I haven't seen them pop up on our end, and HC/PSPC hasn't raised reusable with us.

Curious if this is something we should pursue further since I am talking to several technical apparel companies.

Thanks!
mwtc

From: Media Monitoring / Surveillance des médias (IC) <ic.mediamonitoring-surveillancedesmedias.ic@canada.ca>
Sent: March 27, 2020 5:32 AM
To: IC.O MM Early Morning / SM Matin O.IC <IC.MMEarlyMorning-SMMatin.IC@canada.ca>
Subject: Quebec firm's reusable protective gear could ease shortage (Marco Chown Oved, Toronto Star)

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Quebec firm's reusable protective gear could ease shortage

Each washable gown has potential to replace 75 to 100 disposable ones

Marco Chown Oved Toronto Star

With front-line health-care workers clamouring for more facemasks, gloves and other protective gear, one Montreal company says reusables can help fill the gap amid looming shortages of disposable supplies.

Because it takes the same amount of time to get a disposable gown and a reusable one manufactured and delivered to hospitals, reusables can go much further in treating the expected surge in coronavirus cases in the coming weeks and months.

"Since there's not enough to go around ... every reusable one you get here, it's the equivalent of 75 to 100 of the disposable ones," said Jeff Courey, president and CEO of George Courey Inc. (GCI), a Montreal-based company that specializes in producing reusable isolation gowns, surgical gowns and scrubs.

In the past few days, reports have proliferated of doctors and nurses being asked to ration personal protective equipment (PPE), a message that clashes with reassurances from political leaders that there will be enough to meet demand.

"We're getting more masks. We have 12 million gloves on order, coming in. If they're short, we're going to make sure that we fulfil the requirements," said Premier Doug Ford on Tuesday.

The shortage of PPE has become so extreme that researchers at Duke University have developed a method to sterilize and reuse disposable masks.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated its guidelines last week to recommend health-care professionals use bandanas to cover their faces if nothing else is available. And several U.S hospitals have issued call-outs for volunteers to sew masks at home.

Courey says unlike the homemade equipment Americans are being forced to resort to, the certified reusable PPE his company makes is as safe and effective as disposable PPE.

"I can appreciate that everyone wants to help reduce this shortage as quickly as possible. But it also makes me very, very nervous," he said.

"There's a specific fabric that you need to make proper PPE that will actually protect the person. It's not like you can just go and take, you know, whatever piece of poly cotton fabric and make an isolation gown."

"The isolation gowns that we make use a specialized fabric that is tested and inspected to make sure that it actually does what it's supposed to do, which is protect the user," said Courey.

In the past 10 days, GCI has sold more than 300,000 gowns - almost as many as it has in the past eight years.

Although people might instinctively feel that disposable PPE is safer, Courey says it's important to understand supply chains. The vast majority of disposable PPE is made in China and southeast Asia, where it must be manufactured, packaged, shipped and warehoused before being delivered to the end user.

"There are so many opportunities for that gown to be potentially contaminated," said Courey. "Our gowns are inspected, checked and sterilized locally after every single use."

Instead of being thrown out after each patient encounter, reusable PPE can be washed, sterilized and reused 75 to 100 times.

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