



**Chemical Industry
Council of Illinois**

To: The Honorable Members of the Illinois General Assembly

From: Mark Biel, Chief Executive Officer
Chemical Industry Council of Illinois (CICI)
mbiel@cicil.net or 217/522-5805

RE: Illinois Chemical Industry Efforts Regarding COVID-19

Greetings. I hope this memo finds you and your family safe and well. I am writing you today to provide a status update on the chemical industry in Illinois. As you may be aware, the chemical sector is one of the nation's essential critical infrastructure sectors in the fight against the COVID-19 outbreak. As such, our member sites fall under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Sectors and Governor Pritzker's "Stay at Home" Executive Order.

CICI is participating in the Governor Pritzker's Supply Chain Task Force, which is working to ensure key products including disinfectants, cleaning products, sanitizers, sterilizers, soaps, and personal protective gear, etc. get to the necessary hospitals and medical providers. The chemical value chain manufactures life-saving medicine, disinfectants, medical equipment, food supply, and ensures a clean drinking water supply—all things that we depend on, especially in a crisis.

The business of chemistry in Illinois is playing an important role during this pandemic, providing basic raw materials for the production of health, hygiene, and safety products such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and lifesaving medical supplies. Our member companies have ramped up production of products to ensure a safe and abundant food supply, safe drinking water, and, perhaps most significant in the current crisis, to address the surging demand for health and safety products. Many companies are making changes to their production processes to make materials and finished products including hand sanitizers and other hygiene products in high demand.

The chemical industry also manufactures a wide range of innovative products including biocides, sanitizers, disinfectants, and other cleaning products. Our industry supplies two active ingredients for hand sanitizers – ethanol (ethyl alcohol) and isopropanol (isopropyl alcohol). According to the Centers for Disease and Control Prevention (CDC), a hand sanitizer with an alcohol concentration between 60-95% is most effective in killing germs.

The chemical industry also manufactures polypropylene, a polymer used to make PPE for health care professionals such as masks, gowns, and gloves; polycarbonate to manufacture syringes and surgical instruments; polyvinyl chloride (PVC) used in medical tubing, blood and IV bags, and polyethylene to safely package and preserve foods, as well as personal care and medical products. Further, our industry produces a broad range of performance plastic resins that are in critical demand for manufacturing protective face shields and protective screens that are being installed across supermarkets globally in a bid to safeguard checkout staff from the virus.

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The business of chemistry recognizes the importance of the products they manufacture in times of crisis. While our industry is working around the clock to supply these products to people across the globe, CICI member companies have taken extraordinary measures to protect the health and safety of their employees and to maintain safe operations at their facilities; this while complying with all state and federal environmental regulations.

Here are some of the protocols that our members have put in place to ensure the safety of their employees:

- Member companies are following CDC guidelines for all critical infrastructure sites and essential workers
- Only essential workers are allowed onsite
- Companies have implemented emergency operations plans at manufacturing plants
- Plants undergo frequent and extensive cleaning and disinfection of all equipment and work areas
- Essential workers are medically screened and thermal temperature scanned before being allowed onsite
- Key functions and critical skills are divided into smaller groups and segregated to provide physical distancing
- Companies have put safeguards in place for management of shift change, and compliance functions to minimize face-to-face contact
- Some companies are quarantining “healthy” employees to maintain back-up teams for highly skilled and specialized duties

We also want to thank you for your leadership during these challenging times for our world, and for all you are doing for the safety and well-being of your constituents and our communities.

If you have any comments or questions on this memo or on any particular aspect of the chemical industry as it responds to this crisis, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mark A. Biel'.

Mark Biel, CEO

Note: The chemical industry is the state's 2nd largest manufacturing sector directly employing over 46,000 people in Illinois. In addition, 1.8 million Illinois employees depend on chemical products every day in their livelihoods.

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