



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inmates producing utility Personal Protective Equipment for correctional, medical staff

SIOUX FALLS, S.D.- State prison inmates are producing utility personal protective equipment (PPE) for Department of Corrections and Correctional Health staff members.

Inmates in the Pheasantland Industries (PI) Garment Shop at the Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield are producing cotton jersey face masks and nylon gowns. Inmates in several PI shops at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls are producing reusable and disposable face shields. Inmates in the Print Shop laser cut clear plastic sheets to size for the face shields, the Upholstery Shop inmates make the elastic bands with foam and the Metal Shop workers apply the metal and rivets to the shields.

“We ordered enough materials to produce approximately 3,000 gowns, 6,000 masks, 300 reusable face shields and 1,000 disposable face shields,” said Stefany Bawek, Director of Pheasantland Industries. “Production has begun on the masks and face shields. We expect the material for the gowns to arrive soon.”

While PI is not classified as a producer of medical equipment and the masks are not approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the items can be utilized for emergency situations when no other option is available. While the DOC has supplies of equipment for staff, there are national shortages of personal protective equipment, which makes acquiring additional items difficult. Medical grade equipment needs to be reserved for medical staff for treatment and emergencies.

“This is a perfect example of the DOC and PI staff members and those in our custody coming together to do what’s needed,” said Corrections Secretary Mike Leidholt. “I’m proud to lead an organization that maximizes our resources and our abilities to help out during this pandemic.”

Utility PPE items produced by Pheasantland Industries will also be made available to other governmental agencies.

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Photos and videos of the production of the PPE's are available on the DOC social media accounts:

Twitter @SouthDakotaDOC Instagram sdcorrections

Please courtesy Pheasantland Industries