

3M Updates Ongoing Actions to Combat COVID-related Fraud

3M has created resources to fight fraud, filed 18 lawsuits and removed thousands of deceptive websites and social media posts to stop pandemic profiteers.

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- 3M is sharing results of the global efforts the company launched in March to combat fraud connected to the COVID-19 pandemic. 3M has worked with law enforcement authorities and partnered with ecommerce and technology companies to help protect the public against those exploiting the demand for critical 3M products.

“3M launched this ambitious effort to prevent and stop fraud at the same time as we have been rapidly increasing production of N95 respirators and other needed supplies to combat COVID-19,” said Denise Rutherford, 3M Senior Vice President of Corporate Affairs. “The schemes we shut down were not only unlawful, they also endangered lives and wasted precious time and resources by diverting buyers from legitimate sources of much-needed respirators. We will continue to partner with law enforcement and online retailers to take action against profiteers.”

3M has created hotlines and websites around the world to report suspected fraud, and published N95 respirator pricing information to help customers avoid inflated prices.

3M’s legal team members have investigated more than 4,000 reports globally of suspected fraud, counterfeiting, and price gouging. 3M has filed 18 lawsuits in 10 states and Canada. 3M has won 6 temporary restraining orders and 4 preliminary injunction orders from courts that halted defendants’ unlawful actions. 3M has resolved cases when the defendants have agreed to immediately stop improper behavior. 3M has provided referrals to federal and state law enforcement officials, help that has led to criminal charges filed against several bad actors.

Online, 3M successfully secured the removal of more than 7,000 e-commerce listings with fraudulent or counterfeit product offerings and more than 10,000 false or deceptive social media posts to date.

3M has not, and will not, increase the prices of its respirators as a result of the pandemic. Any damages we recover in lawsuits are donated to COVID-19 relief efforts at nonprofit organizations, including Direct Relief.

3M has launched a [website](#) that provides more information on these and other 3M efforts to fight respirator fraud, counterfeiting, and price gouging. This [website](#) includes details of 3M’s enforcement activities, tips on how to spot fraudulent product offers, counterfeits, and price gouging, expectations of 3M’s authorized distributors, and information on different types of 3M respiratory products.

RECENT LEGAL ACTIONS

3M filed a lawsuit in federal court in Minnesota against Legacy Medical Supplies, L.L.C., Mark Eckhardt, Carol Ann Korpi, Joseph Nelson, and Jeremy Reboulet (Civil Action No. 20-cv-01371) for claiming affiliation with 3M, including misleading potential buyers that they had a direct relationship with 3M’s Chief Financial Officer to get special access to 3M products. This was false. Two defendants quickly settled the claims against them, and the court entered a temporary restraining order against the remaining defendants on July 14, 2020. 3M is represented by William C. Pentelovitch, John T. Duffey, and Thomas R. Pack of Maslon LLP. 3M amended its complaint in Dallas County (Cause No. DC-20-05549), previously filed as a “John Doe” complaint, naming Michael Gilbert as the party claiming to operate as the “3M Company Trust Account” (in fact a mailbox at a UPS Store). 3M is represented by Dimple D. Shah and Susan E. Burnett of Bowman and Brooke LLP’s Dallas and Austin offices.

3M brought suit and won a temporary restraining order in the case against Matthew Starsiak and AMK Energy in federal court in Minnesota (Civil Action No. 0:20-cv-01314); the defendants falsely claimed to be affiliated with (among others) 3M, the Gates Foundation and the law firm Dentons to attempt to deceive buyers into purchasing billions of fictitious 3M N95 respirators. 3M is represented by Kerry Bundy, John Ursu, Isaac Hall, Peter Routhier, David Gomez, Michael Sawers, and Peter Baldwin of Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP's Minneapolis and New York offices.

3M resolved a case in federal court in Indiana against ZeroAqua and its owner (Civil Action No. 1:20-cv-01287), including the grant of a consent judgment ensuring no additional infringement and a payment that will be donated to Direct Relief, as well as assistance identifying other bad actors and an apology to the state of Indiana. 3M is represented by Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath.

3M resolved a case in federal court in Ohio (Civil Action No. 2:20-cv-02932) against Preventative Wellness Consultants LLC d/b/a Preventative Wellness Solutions, which was identified by through pending litigation with Rx2Live, Inc. and Rx2Live, LLC. Preventative Wellness falsely claimed to provide "direct" access to 3M respiratory products when it is not an authorized distributor. In resolving the case, Preventative Wellness has agreed to a consent judgment preventing further infringement as well as a payment that will be donated by 3M to Direct Relief.

3M resolved a matter in Toronto with Canadian company Caonic (Court File No. CV-20-28903), including a payment that will be donated by 3M Canada to United Way Centraide Canada. 3M is represented by David Campbell and Sunny Rehshi of Bowman and Brooke LLP's Detroit office.

3M resolved a matter in federal court in Wisconsin with Hulomil LLC (Civil Action No. 3:20-cv-394), including a consent judgment and a payment that will be donated to Direct Relief, as well as assistance identifying other bad actors. 3M is represented by Shayna Cook, Andrew Rima, and Betsy Farrington of Goldman Ismail Tomaselli Brennan & Baum LLP.

About 3M

At 3M, we apply science in collaborative ways to improve lives daily. With \$32 billion in sales, our 96,000 employees connect with customers all around the world. Learn more about 3M's creative solutions to the world's problems at www.3M.com or on Twitter @3M or @3MNews.

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