3M CEO on COVID-19 response: We have a unique and critical responsibility

3M has a unique and critical responsibility in pandemic preparedness and response – a responsibility I and all our people take very seriously. Our most urgent priority is the safety of our employees, healthcare workers and the public.

Since the initial COVID-19 outbreak, we’ve ramped up to maximum production levels of N95 respirators and doubled our global output to a rate of more than 1.1 billion per year, or nearly 100 million per month. In the United States we are producing 35 million respirators per month; of these, more than 90% are now designated for healthcare workers, with the remaining deployed to other industries also critical in this pandemic, including energy, food and pharmaceutical companies. As a global company, we also manufacture respirators in Europe, Asia and Latin America, and our products are being similarly deployed to support the COVID-19 response in those respective regions.

Like everyone, I see the pleas from our heroic doctors, nurses and first responders for the respirators and other equipment they desperately need. I want people to know we are doing all we can to meet the demands of this extraordinary time and get supplies from our plants to where they’re most needed as quickly as possible. As I write this, more than 500,000 respirators are on the way from our South Dakota plant to two of the more critically impacted areas, New York and Seattle, with arrivals expected starting tomorrow. We are also ready to expedite additional shipments across the country.

While 3M is currently operating at maximum production, we have accelerated investments to expand our global capacity even more. We anticipate being able to nearly double our capacity again, to almost 2 billion respirators globally, within the next 12 months. We are working with the U.S. and other governments, investigating alternate manufacturing scenarios, and exploring coalitions with other companies to increase capacity further. We’ve also maximized production of a wide range of other solutions being used in the response, including hand sanitizers and disinfectants.
I would also like to commend the American federal government for their expansion earlier this week of the U.S. PREP Act. This helps ensure that all N95 disposable respirators can be used in healthcare settings, and has enabled us to increase distribution to those workers beginning this weekend. We call for additional legislation to ensure all critically needed reusable respirators are equally available, which will help conserve the supply of N95s.

3M is working proactively and is well-prepared to protect our employees, maintain business continuity and sustain our operations. Our crisis response team – which I am a member of – is overseeing all aspects of our strategies, and we are collaborating with our business partners across industries to prepare for any and all scenarios that may unfold.

Finally, I’d like to publicly share a sentiment to all 96,000 3Mers around the world: I am tremendously proud of you and the work you continue to do every day. This includes the 50,000 people who, in these most challenging circumstances, come to work in our plants and distribution centers to support making and delivering the products that are critical in this fight. Across all our sites we have established robust protocols for safety, cleaning and medical screening, and we are working closely with local communities and health authorities to ensure safe workplace environments. We also continue to support employees impacted by COVID-19, which includes a new pandemic leave policy in the United States.

We’re at our best as a society when we come together around a common mission. I’m encouraged at the mobilization we’ve seen around the world – with governments, businesses, NGO’s and individuals going above and beyond to do their part to beat this scourge. We are all in this together, and 3M will continue to do all we can to help protect lives and get the world through this crisis.

**Multimedia**

**All Other Multimedia:**

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