



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: 6-9-2020
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JASPER COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY RECEIVES UNITED WAY OF JASPER COUNTY GRANT FOR REUSABLE GOWNS FOR COUNTY

The Jasper County Emergency Management Agency received a \$13,200 grant from the United Way of Jasper County through their Special Needs Fund to assist with response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant will allow the EMA to permanently close an essential personal protective equipment (PPE) gap for county public safety agencies, long term care facilities and Mercy One Newton Medical Center.

The Jasper County Emergency Management's purpose is to coordinate the response to disasters that occur in Jasper County. One of the areas of focus was ensuring PPE was available to frontline healthcare providers, including EMS, long term care facilities and the hospital.

The Jasper County EMA worked diligently to find a source 600 reusable, washable gowns when it became apparent that disposable isolation gowns were in increasing demand.

"During our response, there were many shortages in essential PPE – not only in Jasper County but nationwide," said Josh Harding from Jasper County EMA. "As the pandemic progressed, the PPE needs change and there became a large need for isolation gowns that protect healthcare providers while treating patients."

"We were able to request disposable gowns from the State, but it became a goal to purchase and distribute reusable, washable gowns for EMS, long term care facilities and the hospital," stated Harding. "By finding a more permanent solution, we could ensure that healthcare providers had a consistent supply of gowns to keep them safe."

"The United Way of Jasper County has been committed to serving the people of Jasper County in meaningful ways during the pandemic," said Jessica Lowe Vokes, executive director of United Way of Jasper County. "The purchase of the PPE gowns will help ensure our EMS, medical and nursing home staffs have the protection they need now and in the future. I am proud that United Way was able to step up and meet this need when others could not."

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