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**NEWS
RELEASE**

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COVID-19 UPDATE

City to Use Innovative Method to Combat N95 Mask Shortages

EL PASO, Texas—The City of El Paso will begin using the Battelle Critical Care Decontamination System (CCDS)[™] this week to begin decontaminating reusable N95 masks to help address the specialty mask shortages for healthcare providers and first responders.

“Having the ability to prolong the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as the N95 mask is critical during this pandemic,” said Mayor Dee Margo. “Ensuring the safety of our healthcare workers and first responders who are on the frontline of this fight is a top priority.”

The Battelle CCDS is a self-contained, mobile decontamination system that uses vapor phase hydrogen peroxide to decontaminate N95 filtering face piece respirators.

Battelle CCDS is designed to work on N95 respirators for the removal of any possible COVID-19 contamination. As the crisis of COVID-19 continues in our community, N95 masks used by health officials are scarce and hard to find. The intent of the system is to preserve the N95 masks the region currently has as the masks are nationally in great demand and are scarce.

“This is a great asset for our community that is provided by our federal government at no cost to our residents,” said Frank Perry, Battalion Chief of Special Operations for the Office of Emergency Management. “This will help augment the reuse of PPE in our community.”

The federal government has chosen 60 locations throughout the country where Battelle will set up their decontamination system and El Paso has been chosen as one of the sites.

The system, which will be located on El Paso International Airport property, will be logistically supported by the Office of Emergency Management, and Border Regional Advisory Council (Border RAC). This process will allow an estimate of 80,000 masks to be decontaminated per day.

A N95 mask can be reused approximately 20 times. This decontaminated service will be available to all healthcare facilities, first responders, law enforcement from the City and County of El Paso and our sister cities of Las Cruces, New Mexico and Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua.

The service is free to the partnering entities and not available for private residents.

For more information, visit www.epstrong.org.

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