



Dr. Monica Dixon, third from left, shows gowns made by local volunteers to a trio of newly-hired Olympic Medical Center staff to assist in collecting and distributing gowns and masks at Trinity United Methodist Church on April 7. They include, from left: Karen Tagg, Olympic Medical Physicians care navigator; OMC surgical technologist Mandy Beck; and Bonnie Hurd, a retired social worker and former OMC employee. Sequim Gazette photo by Michael Dashiell

## Communities continue face mask challenge with thousands made so far

Efforts expand to include gowns, 3-D printed face shields

By Matthew Nash

Wednesday, April 8, 2020 1:30am | [NEWS](#)

Community members continue to answer the call to help make personal protective equipment (PPEs) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Clallam County Emergency Management Team staff announced they've received more than 5,200 cloth masks from volunteers as of Monday.

In the Sequim area, members of the Sequim Face Mask Challenge group on Facebook have turned in 3,438 face masks as of Monday, April 6, group co-founder Jim Stoffer said.

All efforts continue to help health officials, first responders and essential workers as PPEs remain in high demand in the area.

The Center for Disease Control's new guidance also recommends people wear cloth masks when going in public.

Peter Raiswell, public information officer for the Clallam County Emergency Management Team, said N95 and surgical masks remain in short supply and reserved for medical personnel and first responders.

He recommends people wear a cloth mask, if possible, and to launder it at least daily. The county is unable to issue cloth masks to those not on the priority list, Raiswell said.

Raiswell emphasizes that even with masks we must continue physical distancing and frequent hand washing as the most important precautions.

“The second thing is that it is voluntary, not mandatory,” he said. “So if you see someone not wearing a mask they are not breaking any law. As tensions continue to increase please resist any urge you may feel to “call out” someone for not wearing a mask.”

### Expansion efforts

Members of the Sequim Face Mask Challenge added to their expertise in recent weeks to include gowns and 3D-printed face shields.

Stoffer said requests for isolation gowns have come in from Olympic Medical Center and Home Instead Senior Care with volunteers turning in 35 so far. The group has created 54 patient gowns, too.

Several teams are partnering, including Clallam County Fire District 3 personnel and Sequim High School Robotics Team members, to create the face shields.

Stoffer said OMC plans to assign three people to help with the supplies workload.

Drop-off and supply pickup options remain active at Trinity United Methodist Church, 100 S. Blake Ave., Sequim Community Church, 950 N. Fifth Ave., Sound Community Bank, 645 W. Washington St., and Greywolf Elementary School, 171 Carlsborg Road.

Clallam County-approved mask guidelines can be found here: [www.deaconess.com/How-to-make-a-Face-Mask](http://www.deaconess.com/How-to-make-a-Face-Mask).

Masks and gowns must be washed and placed in Ziploc bags with the number of items as well as one’s name and contact information on the outside to minimize exposure.



Mary Jendrucko recently donated 50 masks to first responders and health officials through the Sequim Face Mask Challenge and more than 60 masks to QFC staff and Franz Bread delivery truck drivers. “(I’m) trying to keep the people on the front lines as safe as possible,” she said. “It was great to go in and get my weekly shopping done and see some of the face masks in use.” Photo courtesy of Mary Jendrucko

### Continued support

Community-created face masks have helped an array of people with masks going to essential workers and volunteers, such as 30 masks going to the Sequim Food Bank.

For some people, supporting first responders is a personal way to give back.

Mary Jendrucko of Sequim said the fire department helped her family in late November and she wanted to give back, so she made 50 face masks with fun fabric and donated them at Trinity United Methodist last week.

On Monday, she gave 57 more face masks to QFC workers and Franz Bread truck drivers. She also gave the delivery drivers 40 travel-size hand sanitizers for use after deliveries.

“(I’m) trying to keep the people on the front lines as safe as possible,” she said.

“It was great to go in and get my weekly shopping done and see some of the face masks in use.”



Volunteers with Peninsula Friends of Animals turned their attention from making potholders to surgical masks and gowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. They've set a goal to make 1,000 cloth masks, organizers said. Submitted photo

### **Friends support**

After 15 years making and selling more than 1,000 potholders for the Peninsula Friends of Animals as a fundraiser for the rescue, the group of 16 members is shifting to face masks.

Looking to help in a time of need, Danette Grady, the rescue center's executive director, found many of the "Potholder Ladies" were already on the effort with one volunteer making surgical gowns, too.

They follow the Clallam County Emergency Department's pattern and use their supply of donated cotton fabric. They've also found an online source for elastic with a follow-up order in process.

They've set a goal to make 1,000 masks.

To donate to their effort, mail donations to: PFOA, PO Box 404, Sequim, WA, 98382; note that it is for surgical masks.

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Sunland Golf & Country Club members recently donated more than 400 N-95 masks recently to Olympic Medical Center, to help the facility treat patients during the novel coronavirus pandemic. Photo courtesy of Donna Carson

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