

Ford starts production of face shields

Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa (FMCSA) has commenced production of 57,000 protective face shields that will be donated to front-line medical and essential services personnel who are most at risk of contracting the Covid-19 virus that has spread worldwide. Ford has also approached its suppliers and business partners to ramp up production to a minimum of 500,000 units to meet the growing demand for these shields.

The general public and businesses across South Africa are invited to contribute to the project which aims to address the critical shortage of personal protection equipment (PPE) during this global health crisis.



The face shields, which protect the user's eyes, nose and mouth from the coronavirus which is easily spread through coughing and sneezing, are being produced at Ford's Silverton Assembly Plant in Pretoria by employees who volunteered to make a difference during this global pandemic. This South African initiative complements the humanitarian efforts of Ford Motor Company in the US to produce face shields and partnering with GE Healthcare to manufacture ventilators at its Michigan plants.



Ford, GE Healthcare partner to produce ventilators

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"The coronavirus pandemic is unprecedented, and is having a dramatic impact on the health of communities around the world while placing a massive strain on the medical resources of even the most advanced countries," states Ockert Berry, VP Operations at FMCSA.

“With South Africa on lockdown and our plants not operating at the moment, we felt that it was essential for us to use our manufacturing capacity and expertise to contribute to the efforts of the South African government, private healthcare institutions and humanitarian organisations to contain the spread of Covid-19, and to care for those infected with the virus,” Berry says.

The World Health Organization and the South African Department of Health have deemed these face shields, along with the N95 face masks which can be worn under the shield, a crucial part of personal protective equipment for medical personnel who are at the greatest risk of exposure to the coronavirus. They will also be made available to the police, military and those responsible for transporting workers in the essential services industries.

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