

PPE Conservation - Tips & Alternatives

The current pandemic has changed how we are doing business on all fronts. It is important to be proactive in PPE conservation as there is an expected shortage in the weeks and months ahead.

There are back orders on all types of PPE and the short-term outlook is not looking good. We need to strongly plan to conserve our PPE. This can be accomplished in many ways. Planning ahead is key and we'd like to share a few strategies:

- **Conservation**

Plan on using PPE smarter. Use disposable gloves for multiple purposes while gloved, if possible. If you are dressing a decedent, casketing and doing cosmetics, plan to do all of them without de-gloving. If you get interrupted with a phone call in the preparation room while embalming, have a towel or sheet of webril cotton nearby to hold the phone without de-gloving.

- **Alternate Options**

Instead of using multiple disposable gowns, many funeral homes use washable surgical gowns in the preparation room. Another option is using long sleeve scrubs and a rubber or plastic apron that can be disinfected. Some funeral homes use lab coats or reuse gowns that have outlived their practical use life in the preparation room for heaving cleaning, cosmetic application or other jobs that you need to stay clean, but are not necessarily in danger of biological or chemical contaminants. Our funeral home recently bought a couple pairs of heavy dish washing gloves to use when cleaning, dressing and applying cosmetics. Anything that does not require a high degree of tactile dexterity. Those gloves can be repeated used, disinfected, dried and reused.

The old saying in the military was "Improvise, Adapt and Overcome". We all have to take this to heart in the coming months. Supply chains will catch up eventually, but in the meantime, we need to plan to work smarter and be resourceful while safely serving the families that entrusted their loved ones to our care.

Stay safe and together we will get through this.