

CORONAVIRUS

REGION

Ingesting sanitizer, other items a no-no

Michigan Poison Center has received over 80 calls on disinfectant misuse

By Gina Joseph
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It is hard to believe that anyone would use anti-freeze as a hand sanitizer, but to ingest it thinking that it would help to fight off the coronavirus?

Unimaginable but true. "We've had a few instances of people ingesting it," said Denise Kolakowski, an educator with the Michigan Poison Center at the Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit. "We're not shocked because we understand that people are scared."

Since many of the household items that are used for disinfecting are in short supply, some have been using substituting products not meant for use in the home.

The center has received more than 80 calls regarding accidental misuse of automotive products, household industrial cleaning products and disinfectants. While some of these emergencies involved children getting a hold of mom's hand sanitizer, many others have involved adults disinfecting themselves with:

- Antifreeze
- Chafing fuel



COURTESY WSU

Michigan Poison Control Educator Denise Kolakowski said people are scared and they're disinfecting with products they think will help them but they're really not effective in fighting off COVID-19.

- Lighter fluid
- Paint thinner
- Solvents
- Windshield washer fluid

Kolakowski said none of those products are effective in fighting off COVID-19, and misusing them can cause serious burns to the eyes, skin, mouth, throat and stomach.

Hand sanitizer does contain alcohol but the alcohols in these products are poisonous, leading to hospitalization if ingested.

Hand-washing with soap and water remains the best hand hygiene.

Alcohols in hand sani-

tizer are either ethanol or rubbing alcohol (isopropyl alcohol) at 70% alcohol per volume, which can be used to sanitize skin.

Experts warn people should never drink rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer.

The center said standard laundry soaps are adequate to disinfect clothing and non-medical fabric masks. Wash on the hottest tolerable temperature for the fabric and dry on high. Do not wash clothing, masks and gloves with automotive products, paint thinner, solvents, fuels, household or indus-

trial cleaning products and disinfectants. Disposable gloves should be used once and then immediately thrown in the trash. Do not clean and reuse disposable gloves. Wipe down hampers with disinfectant and wash laundry bags.

If disinfectant solutions are not available, 70% alcohol or a diluted bleach solution can be used. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends five tablespoons (one-third cup) household regular bleach (5%) diluted into a gallon of water or four teaspoons bleach in a quart of water. Note that this may discolor or harm certain surfaces and fabrics.

For those who need a hand sanitizer Kolakowski said a safe substitute would include mixing: 2/3 cup rubbing alcohol (isopropyl alcohol) 70% or ethanol with 1/3 cup aloe vera. You can add 8-10 drops of essential oils to the mix to give it a pleasing scent.

Despite the calls the center has received, no deaths have been reported.

"Not at this point," Kolakowski said. "But that has been our concern once started getting calls like this and while we understand why we want to be sure people discontinue these ill-advised practices.

For more information from the Michigan Poison Center, visit poison.med.wayne.edu or call 1-800-222-1222.

OAKLAND COUNTY

Helping hands during the COVID-19 crisis

Rochester supplier to donate 25% of ethanol-based hand sanitizer product

Plymouth Technology, Inc. of Rochester Hills, which supplies specialty chemicals and application services to Midwest manufacturing plants, including ethanol manufacturers, responded to the demand for hand sanitizer, according to a press release.

Plymouth Technology researched and developed a new formula to produce hand sanitizer and connected with Haviland Enterprises, a chemical distribution, manufacturing and packaging company based in Grand Rapids, which had a small-scale manufacturing operation.

Plymouth Technology is donating 25% of production to frontline responders from an expected production of 100,000 gallons of hand sanitizer, www.plymouthtechnology.com.

Milford business launches online fundraiser

Lisa Wiley, owner of ellembegift, a local screen printing business, has started a fundraiser with a line of "Milford Proud" products, to help struggling small businesses in downtown Milford, according to an email. For every item purchased, they're donating \$12 to the Milford businesses that sign up to be a part of the campaign. For information, visit www.ellembegift.com/products/milford-proud-tee-shirts-onesies-bags.

Mitten on My Mind raises funds for mental health during COVID-19 pandemic

Just before the COVID-19 pandemic started to impact the US, Nate Hoffman and his brother, launched an initiative through their online business, Mitten on My Mind, with the goal to raise \$1million for Michigan mental health through the sale of Michigan-themed stickers, according to an email. For the sale of each sticker, \$1 will be donated to the Mental Health Association in Michigan, <https://mittenonmymind.com/collections/stickers>, <https://mittenonmymind.com/blogs/news/sticking-it-to-mental-illness-a-million-dollar-mission>.

Royal Park Hotel launches Pizza for a Purpose for local first responders

Royal Park Hotel's PARK 600 restaurant launches Pizza With a Purpose. A limited number of DIY pizza kits will be available to purchase online through April 16 with curbside pickup on April 17, with 3 p.m. or 4 p.m. pickup times. Pizza With a Purpose kits will include a set of directions to make pizzas. For every pizza kit purchased, PARK 600 will make and donate individual pizzas to first responders and healthcare workers on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis. <https://bit.ly/2JRTmZX>, www.royalparkhotel.net/park-600.htm

PetSmart Charities commits up to \$1M to support animal welfare amid crisis

PetSmart Charities has committed up to \$1 million to support pets and people affected by COVID-19. To learn more about PetSmart Charities and its emergency relief support visit <https://petsmartcharities.org/pro/grants/emergency-relief>.

— Compiled by Kathy Blake, MediaNews Group

CORONAVIRUS-RELATED COMMUNITY NEWS

Health care job openings available across the state

With layoffs in many industries across the state and nation, the healthcare field is seeing an increased need for workers, specifically registered nurses who can help with COVID-19 coronavirus screenings, according to a press release. Pure Michigan Talent Connect currently has a wide variety of job openings, for immediate hire, including health care professionals. Health care workers who may have been laid off from their regular position, are encouraged to check for current opportunities at www.mitalent.org, www.michiganworks.org, or call (517) 371-1100.

City of Troy facilities remain closed, but parks are open

The City of Troy facilities to remain closed, until further notice, but Troy's green space is open. The city asks visitors to maintain proper social distancing, and if sick, stay home and get healthy. Troy Skate Park, playground equipment and park restrooms remain closed. Most city operations will continue as normal, visit the Modified City Services webpage at https://troymi.gov/news_detail_T19_R72.php. Troy R.Y.D.E. is still taking accepting medical appointments, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Call (248) 457-1100. The aquatic center opening is delayed because necessary maintenance can't be done during the work shutdown. The Senior Gardens start date is to be determined. Area seniors may reserve a spot (\$85 residents, \$95, non-residents).

Cannabis medical provisioning center to open with curbside pickup in Hazel Park

New Standard, a cannabis startup, announced the opening of its first provisioning center on April 3 in Hazel Park, located at Ten Mile and John R roads. The center is open for medical use, currently with curbside pickup, according to a press release. New Standard will be donating a portion of all proceeds during the current global health crisis to help local retailers forced to close. The Hazel Park center is the first of several New Standard centers scheduled to open throughout Michigan. For more information, visit www.anewstandard.com.

— Compiled by Kathy Blake, MediaNews Group

STATE



ANNE RUNKLE — MEDIATEWS GROUP

Cashier Vic Nimmons, of the West Bloomfield Busch's Fresh Food Market, rings up an order for Nate Comerford of Farmington Hills.

Senator proposing 'hazard pay' for essential workers

By Anne Runkle
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U.S. Sen. Gary Peters, D-Michigan, is proposing "hazard pay," a raise of \$13 per hour, for health care professionals, grocery store workers, first responders, pharmacists, postal workers and others who provide essential services and cannot work from home.

"Not only do we appreciate them, but we want to compensate them for taking a risk for themselves and their families," Peters said in a telephone news conference Wednesday, April 8.

Peters says the "Heroes Fund" would be introduced as part of legislation that would include other assistance for the U.S. economy and for workers struggling as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He said he has spoken with several other Democratic senators and plans to reach out to Republicans soon.

Workers eligible for the \$13-per-hour bonus would most likely be identified by their employers, who would apply for the assistance from the federal government.

Workers earning less than \$200,000 per year would receive the hourly bonus up to a \$25,000 cap. Those earning more than

\$200,000 per year would be capped at \$5,000 in additional income as a result of the bonus.

The increased pay would be retroactive to the start of the public health crisis and would last until the end of 2020.

Peters' proposed legislation would also press for additional protective gear and other needs that will help ensure the health and safety of essential workers.

A \$15,000 recruitment incentive would attract additional health care workers, home care workers and first responders who will be needed over the

coming months. Peters, an Oakland County native, acknowledges the federal government will be taking on additional debt through assistance programs like the hazard pay proposal.

"Our focus has to be on restarting the economy in as safe a way as possible," he said, adding that states will likely need to keep measures in place that keep workers at home and consumers away from businesses.

He said economists have warned that a recession or even a depression will likely loom.

"A depression would be worse," than increasing debt and possibly creating inflation, he said.

STATE

U.S. to buy 30,000 ventilators from GM

The federal government will buy 30,000 ventilators from General Motors by the end of August for \$489.4 million. GM says it will cover its costs but won't make a profit on the devices, which will cost the Department of Health and Human Services just over \$16,300 each. That includes the parts that hook the ventilators to patients.

HHS says in a statement that the ventilators will go into the Strategic National Stockpile for distribution to where they are needed most to treat coronavirus patients. GM will start by delivering 6,132 ventilators by June 1.

On March 18, GM began working with Seattle-area ventilator maker Ventec Life Systems to increase the company's production.

A short time later the automaker began lining up parts suppliers and retooling an electronics factory in Kokomo, Indiana, to build the devices. The ventilators that GM will sell to the government are capable of caring for critically ill coronavirus patients, GM said. They're a more basic version of one sold by Ventec to distributors for around \$18,000.

President Donald Trump invoked the Defense Production Act on March 27 telling GM to build the ventilators even though work was well under way.

GM said it didn't change anything because of the act and couldn't move any faster than it was going.

GM is planning to start production in Kokomo next week, eventually hitting a rate of 10,000 per month.

STATE BRIEF

Nursing home resident had asked Alexa for help before death

CEDAR SPRINGS» A nursing home resident in western Michigan who died from COVID-19 complications repeatedly asked her Amazon Echo for help with pain, a TV station reported.

"Alexa, help me. ... I am in pain. I have to find a way to relieve it," LouAnn Dagen said in recordings found by her sister, Penny Dagen, and shared with WOOD-TV.

LouAnn Dagen, 66, died Saturday after arriving at Mercy Health St. Mary's hospital in Grand Rapids.

She lived at Metron of Cedar Springs, which disclosed last week that 31 residents and five staff members had tested positive for the coronavirus and were quarantined.

Penny Dagen said her sister was getting medicine to help with pain. She said LouAnn, who had diabetes and hypertension, was taken to the hospital when her oxygen and blood pressure dropped.

"The hospital called me right away and said that they put her on a respirator," Penny Dagen said. "They asked me about giving her CPR if her heart stopped and I said, 'No, she didn't want that.' And then her heart stopped and that was it."

Metron said LouAnn, a resident for more than 10 years, was "getting excellent care" and was taken to the hospital when her health changed.

"Alexa was LouAnn's primary communication tool with her sister who was unable to get to our facility. ... It was a very positive part of her life which we supported fully," said operations director Paul Pruitt.

— The Associated Press

