

Alpek Polyester UK Ltd Joins the Fight Against the Novel COVID 19 Coronavirus

April 2020: Alpek Polyester UK Ltd (APUK) based in Redcar, Teesside, the only UK producer of Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) Resin, normally focuses its manufacturing operations on PET for its use in the production of soft drink packaging (bottles) and food trays markets. However, today it now adds focus on supporting a new critical application in the fight against the Coronavirus.



Under normal circumstances, APUK would be focusing its sales and activities on the imminent seasonal peak in the demand for bottles servicing the drink markets. APUK traditionally supplies over 70 % of these UK markets. Today, APUK has joined in the battle against the Coronavirus and has added focus on the supply of its PET Resin to meet the growing demand for products used to fight COVID 19.

The global pandemic has presented a new and pressing priority in the form of production of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the National Health Service (NHS), namely face shields.

Malcolm Horne, APUK Manufacturing Director was interviewed on BBC Radio Tees, Wednesday, April 22 where he explained the important role APUK is playing in the supply of PET to produce face visors for the NHS.



Malcolm explained that previously face visors were manufactured from an alternate polycarbonate polymer and source. Issues with the polycarbonate face visor include that it is more costly and produces a heavy visor which in the current crisis of constant use is a significant factor. Furthermore, in this period of high, extended and extensive use and disposal, the polycarbonate material cannot be recovered, recycled and reused...an issue that 100%

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recyclable PET Resin not only resolves but is one of its strongest attributes!

The sheer volume of face visors needed by the NHS and others, necessitated an alternate material which is safe, light, transparent, durable, resistant to fogging, quickly and readily available; as well as, lower cost. PET Resin is the resounding solution to these demands and equally importantly in today's culture, the PET visors, unlike polycarbonate, can be recycled time and time again eliminating any environmental impact from disposal.

Weighting approximately 20 grammes, the PET visors themselves are being produced both

within the UK and Ireland. Demand is at unprecedented levels, which to-date shows no sign of slowing.

The end use application has now been categorized by APUK as a priority application. APUK is focused on meeting the demand for its PET to service this critical need and recently donated a volume of its PET product to the cause. These donated materials will allow for the production of a significant quantity of the face visors, and all available resources are being deployed to fulfil the demand and deliver the much-needed PPE to the NHS.

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