

# El Paso/Juarez Medical Device Industry Boosting Production Despite Challenges

El Paso/Juarez is home to over 35 medical device manufacturers, including three of the world's top five global medical device companies, that produce hundreds of millions of devices each year. Many of these manufacturers, both corporate OEMs and contract, are leading the charge to produce and develop emergency medical supplies in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Others are maintaining production of essential medical supplies and equipment despite severe supply chain disruptions due to raw materials coming out of Asia and other global sites impacted by COVID-19. Like the rest of the world, all manufacturers are also faced with serious workforce disruptions due to fear and the urgency to quarantine caused by the pandemic. Despite these growing challenges, it is essential that our region's manufacturers continue to produce at current or increased rates in order to supply necessary PPE, ventilators, and more to our communities and the world at large for every day medical needs as well as the pandemic response.

It is incumbent upon our bi-national community to support our medical device companies in this unprecedented time for healthcare, technology and manufacturing. Thus, BIO El Paso/Juarez, the regional cluster association, surveyed regional medical device manufacturers to learn more about their individual responses and needs, including their capacity to produce emergency medical supplies and supply chain/workforce disruptions. BIO El Paso/Juarez and our greater community must now respond to the needs identified to support this vital industry.

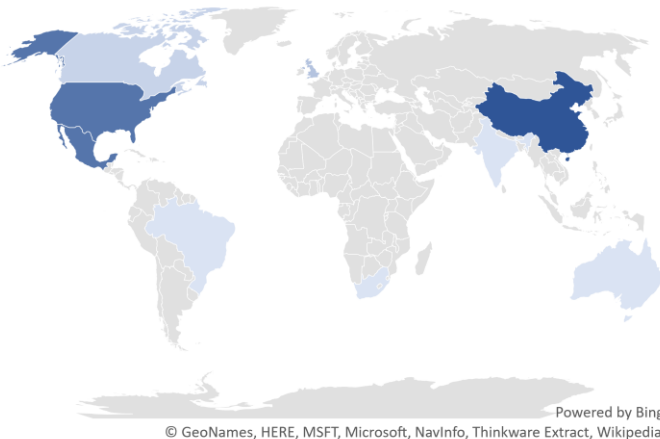
## Survey Snapshot:

Most manufacturers are experiencing **supply chain disruptions** from across the globe.

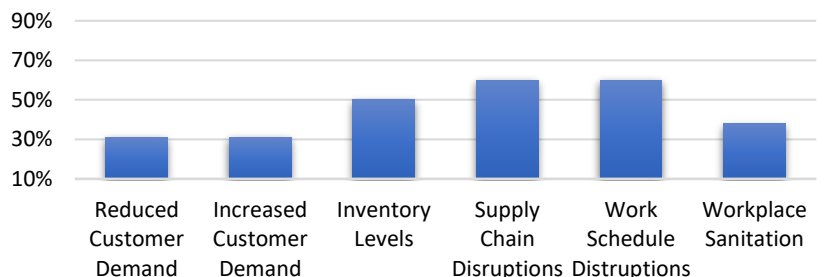
Half of all respondents indicated a **need to find alternative suppliers** in order to maintain current operations.

100% of respondents are **concerned about anticipated/current changes to operations** due to the coronavirus outbreak.

## Global Supply Chain Disruptions



## Which anticipated/current changes in your operations due to the coronavirus outbreak are you most concerned about?



## Emergency Medical Supplies:

60% of respondents are producing emergency medical supplies in El Paso and / or Juarez used to diagnose and treat COVID-19, including:

- Cotton swabs
- Gloves (all sizes)
- Lightweight protective suits
- Isolation gowns
- N95 masks
- Surgical masks
- Over-the-shoe booties
- Other medical PPE
- Rapid PCR test kits
- Vital signs monitors
- Endotracheal tubes
- Mechanical infusion pumps
- 3D printed masks
- Blood pressure cuffs
- Ultrasound devices

## Capacity:

**40%** of manufacturers already producing emergency medical supplies indicated that they have **additional capacity in both Juarez and El Paso** to produce more.

20% of manufacturers that are not currently producing emergency medical supplies indicated available capacity to do so.

**Primary constraints / resources needed** for increasing production include:

- Suppliers (raw materials and finished goods)
- Permits / regulatory guidance
- Employees
- 3D printers
- Sterilization technologies
- Specific tooling
- Upgraded equipment

## Leading the Charge:

When asked for other ways they are responding to the coronavirus outbreak, it was no surprise to see that the El Paso/Juarez medical device manufacturers are stepping up and responding in positive ways. In addition to **increased supply chain and logistics support**, many manufacturers are **developing partnerships and collaborating with other companies** to increase capacity. A few manufacturers are **expanding their R&D efforts** and collaborating with innovators to develop and test new devices. Many are **donating surgical gowns, masks, and gloves** to areas most impacted by COVID-19. Critically, all are implementing plans to keep their **workforce safe and manufacturing facilities sanitized and secure**.

## Summary:

The medical device industry in the El Paso-Juarez region is in a critical position to contribute to global needs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a North American manufacturing powerhouse, El Paso-Juarez has the essential capabilities, skilled workforce, and manufacturing capacity to ramp up production and develop medical supplies badly needed by the healthcare and research community. Although challenges faced by the medical device sector are not unique to this region, we may be uniquely positioned to respond in ways that many others cannot. Our still-relatively low numbers of positive COVID-19 cases, our cross-border collaboration, and our manufacturing proficiency will help us to find innovative solutions in one of the most challenging times in our world's history.

### *Some critical steps government and community leaders in both the U.S. and Mexico can make to support medical device manufacturers include:*

- Communicating the importance of the medical device manufacturing industry in El Paso and Juarez and the role they play in responding to COVID-19.
- Protecting the medical device manufacturing workforce: removing barriers and developing support networks for line workers, manufacturing engineers, supply chain / logistics employees, and others to continue their work in a safe and secure environment.
- Working with government agencies to ensure that relaxed policies, certifications, and other guidelines for emergency medical supplies are complimentary in both the U.S. and Mexico (ie: FDA, FEMA, CDC, Cofepris)
- Supporting efforts from non-medical device manufacturers to support the development of medical supplies by facilitating collaborations, partnerships, and inventive solutions where needed.
- Working within the region's innovation ecosystem to support innovators, healthcare professionals and others developing novel technologies to respond to COVID-19.
- Ensuring that cross-border trade continues to be supported and prioritized.
- Understanding the local medical supply needs.
- Supporting BIO El Paso-Juarez's efforts to respond. Efforts include:
  - o Launching a COVID-19 Strategic Task Force led by the manufacturing industry to tackle short- and long-term challenges posed by the pandemic.
  - o Creating a forum/communications hub on its website to facilitate new partnerships and communicate requests for help, offers to help, regulations, guidelines, etc.
  - o Partnering with the MCA Foundation and Battelle to develop a medical supply / equipment manufacturing task force.
  - o Working with the MCA's Innovation Center to support new medical device ideas and inventions.

## About BIO El Paso-Juárez:

*BIO El Paso-Juarez drives innovation, collaboration, growth and resilience in the regional medical device sector by bringing together medical, industrial, academic, governmental, and entrepreneurial leadership.*

With more than 40 members encompassing each of these sectors, BIO El Paso-Juarez is leading efforts to bring stakeholders together in supporting increased manufacturing capacity in response to COVID-19.

BIO El Paso-Juarez is proud to bring you relevant data and information on our region's medical device manufacturing sector. To support our continued efforts, become a member or sign up for our newsletter at [www.bioelpasojuarez.org](http://www.bioelpasojuarez.org).