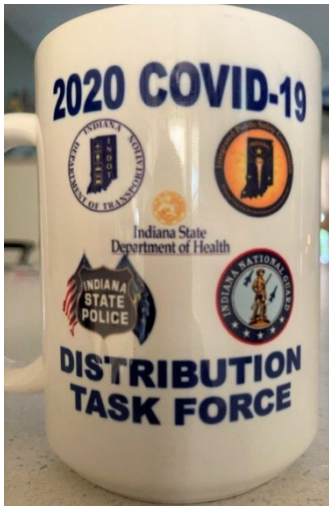


INDOT Continues Stellar COVID-19 Response

INDOT has been working hard behind the scenes every day since March to combat COVID-19 — even if our ongoing efforts have garnered little public attention.

In late March and early April, INDOT received accolades for teaming with the Indiana State Police (ISP) to plan, map and distribute critical personal protective equipment (PPE) and medical supplies to those hospitals and county health departments with urgent needs throughout the state. INDOT's efforts were featured on local TV news segments from around the state and in this [ERIN story](#). At the time, we had helped deliver 372,000 surgical masks, 295,000 pairs of gloves, 113,000 surgical gowns, and 85,000 face shields.

Since that time, INDOT has worked daily to continue providing aid to battle COVID-19. The work has been immense but unheralded, as TV stations and newspapers have no longer reported on it.



A coffee mug displays INDOT's role in distributing supplies during COVID-19.

"INDOT executive staff members have committed our agency to be the primary transportation resource for PPE and medical supplies for this pandemic," said Emergency Response Field Liaison Lyle Sadler, who has had a daily presence in COVID-19 efforts since Day 1. "This is my 40th year as an INDOT employee and, other than representing INDOT at the 2012 Henryville tornado event, this has been my most gratifying experience as the agency's emergency response liaison and as a public servant for Indiana."

In the early spring, State Highway Maintenance Director J.D. Brooks organized the initial effort for INDOT to make mass deliveries across the state. The crucial supplies came from the National Strategic Stockpile. After the supplies were sorted at the Indiana National Guard's Stout Field in Indianapolis, and under the guidance of the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), we joined ISP and the Indiana National Guard to deliver the supplies to medical facilities around the state. Greenfield District Highway

Maintenance Director Pat Szewczak worked closely with his counterparts in the other five districts to provide transportation resources for deliveries of PPE and medical supplies to all 92 Indiana counties as they were requested through the ISDH.

The last delivery took place April 2 in accordance with the original plan. However, as additional positive cases of COVID-19 appeared around the state, it was quickly determined that INDOT deliveries would be needed long-term.

We have been involved every day since then. Sadler has been assigned daily to help organize needed INDOT resources based on shipment sizes and delivery locations. Deliveries have been made to long-term care facilities, hospitals, county health departments, COVID-19 drive-through testing sites for site set-up and resupplies along with test-kit delivery, and more.

Since the beginning of pandemic, INDOT has delivered approximately:

- 3 million pairs of gloves
- 2.9 million surgical masks
- 1.7 million N95 respirators
- 900,000 face shields
- 230,000 surgical gowns
- 169,000 gallons of hand sanitizer

Besides delivering National Strategic Stockpile items, INDOT has been involved in the Indiana Economic Development Corp.'s PPE Directory, which features Indiana companies that manufacture a variety of PPE items. INDOT forces, primarily from the Greenfield District because of its central location, have facilitated these pickups weekly with rented trucks parked at Stout Field. Upward of 200,000 masks have been picked up from one vendor alone. Other products have included gowns, face shields, goggles, and hand sanitizers. On average, INDOT has completed 10 of these types of pickups per week since April, distributing the goods to facilities in need.

Additionally, some shipments have been taken to Langham Logistics in Plainfield, where they have been assembled into packages for distribution to nonmedical entities when the economy started to open back up.

In order to support all pickup and delivery needs, INDOT began renting box trucks and cargo vans to be parked at Stout Field. The deliveries are large enough that assets are required outside of what INDOT has readily available. For INDOT to efficiently pick up and deliver PPE without using multiple vehicles per location, the need for box trucks and cargo vans was essential.

“At one point, the distributions grew to where the ISDH also requested additional box trucks,” said Sadler. “Thirty box trucks and 10 cargo vans were used to execute the response. INDOT provided drivers for each of these transport vehicles.”

Although there is no typical day at Stout Field, Sadler is provided with delivery location of supplies to various sites around the state daily. Sadler determines the size of each shipment and coordinates with Szewczak to obtain the necessary manpower and, possibly, INDOT vehicles to transport. From mid-August to mid-September, this has averaged to between 25 and 30 shipment locations around the state per week.



To transport needed supplies to combat COVID-19, INDOT has used dump trucks (top photo), cargo vans (middle photo) and box trucks (bottom photo).



“Depending on the size of each delivery, supplies from multiple locations can be loaded into one transport vehicle to help minimize the need of INDOT resources required,” said Sadler. “Each INDOT district is involved in providing resources to assist with these deliveries.”

The districts also have provided message boards, traffic cones, and sandbags (for signs) to multiple drive-through COVID-19 test-site locations that are set up around the state.

Also, from Sept. 28 to Oct. 2, INDOT is providing traffic cones, message boards, and a few drivers for a study occurring throughout the state. The study is a collaboration between the ISDH and Indiana University Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health at IUPUI. The scientific study measures the spread of COVID-19 throughout the state via random sample testing. The testing is conducted in four phases throughout the year. This is the third phase.

Sadler can’t say enough about how INDOT has banded together regarding this initiative.



Lyle Sadler



Pat Szewczak

“I’m grateful to be part of such a great team,” said Sadler. “Deputy Commissioner of Operations Mike Smith and J.D. Brooks have provided superb guidance since the beginning of our operation at Stout Field. Pat Szewczak has organized our state resources with the other five INDOT districts to enable us to answer the call when deliveries need to be made. Greenfield District Heavy

Equipment & Emergency Response Foreman Lucas Duncan has stepped up to be a great teammate at Stout Field by maintaining and organizing our leased vehicle fleet.”

Sadler also praised Steve Harney, James Kinder, and Jamie Gallagher for serving as INDOT’s emergency support function-1 representatives to the State of Indiana Emergency Operations Center (EOC) the entire time that Sadler has been assigned to Stout Field.

“Without their expertise and commitments, I would not have had the opportunity to participate in the Stout Field operation as much as I have,” said Sadler. “Each of them continues to be our representative during the State EOC activation. Also, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, ISP, ISDH, and the Indiana National Guard have been outstanding partners and true professionals during our time together in helping Hoosiers. I’ve made some very good friends in the process.”

Szewczak also marveled at the outstanding commitment to this cause.

“It is rewarding to be part of a team that is so dedicated to our citizens,” said Szewczak. “Being able to watch the team effort that is put forth week after week while continuing with our normal business operations gives me a huge sense of pride.”

Szewczak continued, “I am very proud of the Greenfield District team, the other INDOT district teams, and all our state-agency partners in what we have accomplished through this critical need.”



Boxed supplies inside a warehouse at Stout Field await delivery by INDOT.