



ORD QUIZ

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Ord Pharmacists Making Hand Sanitizer for Central Nebraska Residents

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Unlike many businesses in Nebraska and across the country, Good Life Pharmacy was relatively prepared for this pandemic.

Once Jim Andreessen and Angela Svoboda realized that there was a dwindling supply of gel hand sanitizer due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, they knew they would have to start acquiring products that are used for making the disinfectant — and fast.

For the Ord business partners, however, the fear of product shortages is not a new experience. As pharmacists, Andreessen and Svoboda are always on the hunt for medicines they could potentially run out of.

"It's not new to us," said Andreessen. "But it's our job to try our best to get the things our patients need."

Good Life Pharmacy, which opened in Ord in 1996, is a "compounding facility," meaning that the pharmacists who work there also make pharmaceutical products from raw substances, and are able to make medications that are unique to their patients.

When sanitizer shortages were first cropping up, Nebraska had a rule that compounding pharmacists needed a prescription



Angela Svoboda and Jim Andreessen, pharmacists at Good Life Pharmacy in Ord.

courtesy photo

So Svoboda said the pharmacy reached out to a local doctor to get prescriptions in order to make gel-based hand sanitizer.

"There was a lot of red tape for us to go through," said Svoboda. "It's a big, complex and time-consuming process."

get supplies."

The state Legislature has since lifted the rule, allowing compounding pharmacies to more easily make the products they need.

And in the meantime, Svoboda

and distributed the disinfecting solutions to care facilities, hospitals and local businesses in central Nebraska. When they can't get material from their suppliers, they turn to local businesses as

well as

they turn to 95 proof alcohol bought from grocery stores.

"It's a stressful situation, but there is a sense of connection between all of us," said Svoboda. "We're all working together to solve a problem."

While many Nebraskans are figuring out how to work from home, the pharmacists are clocking in at their Ord location (one of three) on the weekend, as well as starting work early and leaving late on weekdays.

But, the business isn't making money right now. The bottles of hand sanitizer are being sold at cost, which just about covers the cost of production.

"Packaging is really the expensive thing," said Svoboda. "We're just going to keep going till we can't."

The pharmacists are now trying to get their hands on hydroxychloroquine. The drug, which is often used as a treatment for lupus, is being studied by the federal government as a possible way to treat COVID-19.

Svoboda said a lot of their patient base is dependent on the drug for non-COVID-19 needs, which worries her because demand for the drug is now skyrocketing.

"We want to get our hands on the pure powder form so we can