

# Raising spirits in Naples against pandemic

---

A distillery and skin-care product maker partner to pump out free hand sanitizer

***This content is being provided for free as a public service to our readers during the coronavirus outbreak. Please support local journalism by subscribing to the Daily***

***Messenger: <https://mpnnow.com/subscribenow>***

Hollerhorn Distilling in Naples, closed to the public due to coronavirus, is putting its spirits into production of hand sanitizer. A joint project with On Hand Lotions in Naples, the businesses are providing 2-ounce bottles of sanitizer free to locations around town where people really need it. That includes the Naples Apothecary, Rennoldson's Market and Bob's Alignment, with more businesses to be added as well as a senior-apartment complex in the village.

"We're having a hard time keeping up," said Karl Neubauer, Hollerhorn head distiller and co-owner with his wife, Melissa Neubauer.

The Food and Drug Administration-approved sanitizer is 80 percent alcohol, manufactured and bottled according to all regulations. Also in the works are 6- to 8-ounce bottles of spray sanitizer. Employees are using the sanitizers on the job, and with limits per customer, providing hand sanitizer for people who need it the most such as elderly patrons and others most at risk during the pandemic.

Karl and Hayna Humphries-Weems, owner of On Hand Lotions, are working together but each from their separate facilities. "Sometimes I combine all ingredients here to deliver to her in bulk, and she bottles, and sometimes I combine and bottle here," Karl said.

Humphries-Weems is making new formulas compliant with the World Health Organization's guidelines. "Karl and I are working solo day and night to get distillate made, and sanitizer solutions batched, bottled, labeled, and distributed," she said.

"We have really become close through this, and the community has stepped up in a big way," Karl said.

## How to help

---

How to support production of hand sanitizer in Naples:

Donations, appreciated in any amount, can go to On Hand Lotions or Hollerhorn Distilling

**Mail:** On Hand Lotions, PO Box 73, Naples, NY 14512; or Hollerhorn Distilling, 8443 Spirit Run, Naples, NY 14512

**PayPal:** [hello@onhandlotions.com](mailto:hello@onhandlotions.com) or [hello@hollerhorn.com](mailto:hello@hollerhorn.com)

Donations help offset the cost. Hollerhorn sacrificed all of what was going to be its new vodka release to sanitizer production. That means the distillery still needs to pay excise tax on all of the alcohol produced — not sustainable over the long-term. On Hand Lotions has to buy the inactive ingredients, bottles and labels.

Working alone on Monday at Hollerhorn on County Road 36, Karl said the space is sanitized and he and his family are isolating themselves to protect against the virus. Karl said family members in Austria are living with even more severe restrictions due to the pandemic, which reinforce the seriousness of what we are all up against.

In Rochester, Black Button Distilling has also responded to the crisis, switching from manufacture of bourbon and other alcoholic beverages to ethanol-based hand sanitizer.

The distillery, on Railroad Street near the Rochester Public Market, planned to make 18,000 bottles of hand sanitizer during its first two weeks of production.

“We are uniquely qualified to safely handle and bottle ethanol-based hand sanitizer, and we have an extensive network of contacts to bring bottles, labels, labor and ingredients to bear,” Jason Barrett, Black Button’s president and master distiller, said in a news release. “We are doing this to help our community, to hopefully save lives and to get our employees back to work. We want to do our part in these unprecedented times.”

The product will initially be provided at cost to local hospitals, medical offices and other at-risk communities, such as homeless shelters, fire departments and day care centers. Hand sanitizer will not be available for purchase directly to consumers, Barrett said. He said the turnaround time to learn a new set of federal regulations, retool a major production plant and prepare teams of employees in order to make a food grade product for the first time was “extremely quick” — just 48 hours.

“Our machines have to be modified, new processes have to be created, team members trained and our licenses have to be checked with relevant state and federal authorities,” he said. “I couldn’t stand by and watch this pandemic ravage my hometown of Rochester. We will work around the clock to help as many as we can.”

Karl said his phone is blowing up with calls from people all over asking for hand sanitizer, many in jobs where they desperately need it such as truck drivers. He is in close contact with Barrett and a growing pool of distillers statewide over what is becoming a coordinated effort against the pandemic through the New York State Distillers Guild.

“We are all scrambling, trying to network,” Karl said.

*Includes reporting by Victoria E. Freile, Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*