

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

COVID-19: ENSURED CONTINUED MANUFACTURING OF GLASS PACKAGING

EUROPEAN CONTAINER GLASS INDUSTRY POSITION

Brussels, 19 March 2020

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic requires the implementation of strong measures to delink the chains of SARS-CoV 2 transmission across the society. This is currently resulting into a dramatic slowdown or shutdown of trade and industry activities.

The European Container Glass Manufacturers are following closely the WHO guidelines and national authorities' response plans to reduce the further spread of COVID-19 while continuing to guarantee the effective and efficient supply of glass containers to food and beverage, medical and other essential goods' supply chains locally and across borders.

The European container glass industry has undertaken immediate and equally strong measures to guarantee:

- Health and safety of the workforce in the glass manufacturing plants;
- Continuity of supply of container glass to critical sectors such as food, beverage or pharmaceutical.

The European Container Glass Industry asks the relevant authorities for support in recognizing the critical role of our industry and supporting manufacturing continuity across our container glass manufacturing plants – all with the objective to supply people with food , beverages and pharmaceutical goods in this critical time.

The European Container Glass manufacturing industry has 160 glass manufacturing plants in the EU and maintains 125.000 jobs operating in a circular economy business model with over 70% of all our products sold in the EU destined to go back to our factories to make new food grade packaging. FEVE has been an active member of the PEF pilot phase for food and beverages.

Problem:

Governmental bodies have responded to the current COVID-19 pandemic in order to delink the chains of COVID-19 transmission across the society. As a consequence, industry and trade is facing a huge disruption. Identified critical sectors, such as the food and beverage sector, are exempted from shutdown to ensure people have enough supply of products which respond to primary needs. Packaging plays a key role in the identified critical sectors of food, beverage and medical supply chains. The production of packaging plays a crucial role and is therefore an essential and critical industry.

Container Glass manufacturers are an integral part of the food and drink supply chain. In case of any shut down of container glass facilities the food and drink value chain will face direct and imminent

disruptions which will result in inability to supply food and beverages of primary necessity to retail and consumers. The same problem applies to the pharmaceutical sector because our industry also produces container glass for the pharmaceutical supply chain.

It is important to note that container glass furnace installations require continuous operation and supervision (24/7 365 days over 12-20 years). This is mainly for safety reasons to prevent explosions and leakage of 1500°C melted glass. Furnaces refractories are only able to be heated and cooled a limited number of times before they need to be replaced. Shutting down furnaces during this period will reduce the expected lifespan of all furnaces. Several older furnaces will not be in a condition to restart. The lead time to replace a furnace is over a year, with costs up to 25m€.

With regards to the required supervision and the need to supply container glass into the critical supply chains, we need our employees continuing to work in our factories, and our suppliers' operations. A classification of the container glass sector and its supply chain as a critical / essential industry is therefore vital for our industry and the supply of critical goods. In addition, our employees' children must have access to childcare.

How the glass industry responds to COVID-19. As an industry, our primary concern is the health of our employees. We have therefore taken additional measures to both protect our workforce and keep production intact to maintain a sustainable supply to the food, beverage and medical sectors. Container glass manufacturing plants are submitted to rigid scrutiny from a food hygiene perspective. Plants operate on the basis of 3rd party audited and certified food hygiene management systems.

The measures include:

- In and outbound logistics has been re-organised (no direct contact with truck drivers);
- COVID-19 training and awareness programmes for our employees;
- COVID-19 risk assessments have been introduced based on the US CDC standard;
- Rigid quarantine policy for employees with elevated potential COVID-19 risk
- travel minimisation and no travel to and from identified risk areas;
- workplace re-organisation (home office where possible, reorganization of work processes to achieve social distancing);
- ban of visitors to our facilities;
- minimized use of contractors,
- survey of contractors' COVID-19 risk exposure,
- setting up a reporting system

All container glass manufacturers are in close contact across the supply chain either directly and or through associations. We also relentlessly monitor developments and review effectiveness of the implemented measures.
