



## The Paint and Coatings Industry: Making Essential Products, Supporting Critical Infrastructure

### Who We Are

The U.S. paint and coatings industry employs approximately 295,000 people in all 50 states, which includes manufacturing, research and development, distribution, application, and retail, among others. Paints and coatings are a \$29 billion-dollar industry in the United States.

### What We Produce

Virtually every man-made product has a coating. Coatings provide additional and much needed performance characteristics to the finished product, providing protection from degradation like corrosion, abrasion, high or low temperatures, chemicals and ultraviolet rays, moisture, and microbes, among a host of aggressive or destructive conditions.

Industrial Coatings are typically factory-applied and include **finishes on medical equipment, food service products like cans, jars and packaging, transportation equipment, paper, metal building products** and much more. Architectural coatings are used for **the protection and general maintenance of residential, commercial, institutional and industrial buildings like hospitals and healthcare facilities**. Specialty coatings include **high performance products like traffic and highway markings; marine coatings and anti-corrosion marine coatings developed for the Navy; and military-specified coatings that create a hardening effect for blast mitigation in buildings, including embassies and defense installations**.

### Why Our Products are Essential

Every single manufacturing process that results in the production of a non-liquid product includes a process for coating the finished good, making the coatings industry an integral part of and partner to the larger manufacturing industry.

**The coatings industry is essential to numerous other industries**, including those on the frontline of the coronavirus response. The industry supports health care, hospitals, defense, food, hygiene, agriculture, energy, public works, and information technology systems, as well as others.

### Examples of the Critical Contribution of the Coatings Industry

Without coatings, many other industries and parts of our society would greatly struggle or even fail:

**Life-saving equipment, such as ventilators and vital signs monitors**, have multiple parts and components that must be coated to protect them and ensure that they work as designed. Each of these parts will be made at a different location, by different parts suppliers. Each of these parts suppliers will buy their protective coatings from multiple sources and need the ability to choose the supplier which will have the necessary coating available as rapidly as possible.

Other **critical pandemic-related suppliers and equipment require coatings** supplied by operational paint and coatings manufacturers. These include everything from **swab sticks to endotracheal tubes**,

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**protective clothing to respirators and sample transport media.** For example, protective suits and over-shoe booties are coated to make sure they perform as needed. If coatings manufacturing companies — and upstream suppliers and distributors — close, it will severely impact manufacturers' ability to supply these essential parts necessary to healthcare products and personal protective equipment.

Waterproofing coatings are essential in **preventing “Sick Building Syndrome:”** waterproofing the envelope of new concrete buildings is crucial in preventing mold and mildew buildup, which can cause respiratory-related illnesses. These products are used mostly for remediation projects of existing facilities, including nursing homes, hospitals, and other areas where public health is critical.

Coatings applied to consumer goods and packaging are necessary to maintain the integrity, sanitary nature and security of the product.

## **Coatings are Essential to Critical Infrastructure**

- HealthCare/Public Health
- Public Works
- Food and Agriculture
- Transportation and Logistics
- Critical Manufacturing
- Chemicals
- Defense Industrial Base
- Construction
- Communications and Information Technology

## **Our Continued Commitment to Worker Safety in Response to COVID-19**

The safety and health of our industry's employees, customers and users has always been paramount to our companies. Paint and coatings production is highly automated, and most people do not work in close proximity to complete necessary tasks. In the face of COVID-19, paint and coatings manufacturers have incorporated social distancing and increased hygiene measures at their manufacturing plants, and instituted specific practices to successfully accomplish heightened worker safety. These include taking the following steps:

- Paint and coatings manufacturers have adopted workplace preparedness measures and initiated many precautions recommended by the World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as by other federal, state and local health agencies. These measures and precautions center on the best practices which would protect our workplaces and mitigate the risk of the virus transmission.
- Paint and coatings production and R&D cannot occur in a “work from home program,” but regional administrative roles are already working remotely. Creative work schedules afford additional protections with staggered start times and limited shift overlaps.
- R&D facilities conducting lab work maintain social distancing and effective hygiene (i.e., thoroughly wiping down surfaces with isopropyl alcohol/water or disinfectant solutions).

These are only a few examples of how companies in the coatings industry have increased focus on worker health and safety in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **An Essential Part of the COVID-19 Response**

The paint and coatings industry is a vital and irreplaceable part of our country's economy, and is prepared to do its part for workers, families and our nation during this time. As such, the manufacture, distribution, and research and development of paints, coatings and adhesives are essential to the critical infrastructure of the nation and must be permitted to participate in the solution to the COVID-19 response.

For more information about the paint and coatings industry, visit [www.paint.org/industry](http://www.paint.org/industry).

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