



# KEY THE MIC

## SHOW NOTES: EPISODE No. 2



Early in the pandemic, fire departments were scrambling to find PPE and cleaning supplies to keep crews safe. Chiefs Jerry Wendt and Tyler Off know firsthand just how dire the situation was. One in Wisconsin, the other in Colorado, both Chiefs demonstrated that 'necessity is the mother of invention.' They each developed devices to assist with disinfecting and decontaminating PPE and equipment for first responders.

### Bleach Spray Decontamination for Apparatus with Chief Jerry Wendt:

"The idea came from side-work that I do. When I am not at the fire house, I do some painting... I saw what the CDC was suggesting or recommending for dry time and for cleaning chemicals, and I noticed that if I put the two together, the bleach, the water, combined with a normal spray gun, I was able to achieve what the CDC standards were set. It worked out very well for our situation not only for EMS but for the fire guys as well." [01:28]

"Decontamination spray or wipes that you may purchase are much more expensive... I can get the spray gun for approximately \$60 online. Most departments have an air compressor in house. If not, you definitely could run it off of an SCBA bottle with a few pressure regulators, but obviously those are more cost[ly]. A gallon of bleach is about \$4 and tap water is - I don't want to say free - but about as close to free as we're gonna to get." [04:23]

## GUEST



**Jerry Wendt** is the Assistant Fire Chief of Jefferson Fire Department in Jefferson, WI. He has been serving in the fire service for 21 years. Jerry got involved in firefighting after a garbage truck caught fire outside his house and sparked the interest in being a firefighter. He serves as a public information consultant and created the video seen in our links about the decontamination technique using a spray gun.

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Link to video: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=503693653645593>

Link to Channel 15 news article: <https://www.nbc15.com/content/news/Jefferson-Fire-Department-debuts-new-way-of-cleaning-their-equipment-569628571.html>

### UV Mask Decontamination Chamber with Chief Tyler Off:

"Our goal was just one mask at a time... we are a small service, but you could scale this to any scale. I know I spoke with many fire departments that have scaled up to do multiple masks or 10s, 100s at a time ... But we just built a simple, small box. Our goal when we developed it was to make something that was relatively cheap ... around a \$100, \$150 that anybody could build with simple tools. We sourced the UV lights from an HVAC company. They use UV occasionally in HVAC systems, so we tried to make sure the materials were readily available so that this could be useful to anybody." [10:45]

"I think it's awesome that so many people in the fire service stepped up and got creative. I think that's what firefighters are strong at doing is getting the job done and being creative like that. I would reiterate that we need to keep that mentality and not lose focus on how serious COVID actually is and not get lax on it." [16:16]

# GUEST



**Tyler Off** is the Chief of South Fork Fire Rescue in South Fork, Colo. Back in 2001, he began volunteering at the South Fork Fire station. He worked at Fort Collins for a period of time, but came back to South Fork and became chief in 2007. He enjoys small-town living in South Fork.

**Chief Tyler Off**  
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Link to Channel 13 news article: <https://krdo.com/news/2020/03/31/colorado-fire-department-says-its-developed-a-way-to-sterilize-reuse-n95-masks-amid-shortage/>

**Inanna Hencke** joined the Western Fire Chiefs Association (WFCA) team in 2018, and serves as the Director of Association Management in addition to her role as Podcast Host. She received her undergraduate degree in Religious Studies from the University of Oregon, with a minor in Environmental Studies. In her free time, she can be found experimenting with vegan recipes, working on various art projects, horseback riding, and playing Dungeons & Dragons.



# HOST

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