

MANUFACTURING

St. Louis plastics manufacturer finds niche – and a Fortune 100 customer – in PPE supply chain 🔑



BPI President Sam Longstreth (center) with PPE produced from BPI plastic.

BRENTWOOD PLASTICS INC.



By Nathan Rubbelke
Reporter, St. Louis Business Journal
3 hours ago

During the Covid-19 outbreak, defense contractor Lockheed Martin Corp. called St. Louis-based Brentwood Plastics Inc. (BPI) about personal protective equipment. The industry giant wanted to know if the local firm, which manufactures custom polyethylene plastic film, could provide materials for it to produce medical isolation gowns.

BPI's president, Sam Longstreth, was confident his company could assist the Fortune 100 company. He wasted no time getting products to Lockheed Martin.

“We found a roll of what we knew would meet their requirements, and it was put on a plane that night. The film ran perfect on the test run. They then placed an order for

enough film to make 110,000 gowns,” Longstreth said.

BPI said Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) has used its material to make more than 200,000 gowns. Overall, more than 1.6 million gowns were made from BPI’s plastic in April, the company said. Orders held steady in May, and Longstreth doesn’t see demand easing in the near future.

“I think that the government has said that we are never going to be in this situation again. Everything that anybody can manufacture now is being used. But I suspect once we get around this thing, it's going to be ‘and now build the stockpile,’” he said.

Currently, BPI is providing plastic to five companies to produce impermeable medical gowns, said Longstreth, adding that four of those firms have pivoted amid Covid-19 to become gown makers.

Founded in 1962, BPI provides its plastic materials for use in a variety of sectors, including health care, food service, agriculture and construction. It was launched by Joe Longstreth and today is owned by his sons Sam and Joel Longsteth, the firm's marketing manager. The company is headquartered in Brentwood, with a sales office located in Austin, Texas.

In addition to its PPE niche of providing film for medical gowns, BPI's material is used in other medical supplies such as surgery drapes and ostomy bags. The manufacturer also is working with a Washington University doctor on development of a positive airflow mask, Sam Longstreth said.

Brentwood Plastics, with 22 employees, had sales of about \$10 million in 2019. Longstreth said he hopes his firm does about \$11 million in sales this year.

COMPANIES IN THIS ARTICLE

Brentwood Plastics, Inc.

Saint Louis, MO

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