Distilleries Struggling to Make Sanitizer Amidst FDA Regulations

To help combat the lack of essential supplies, many industries have stopped normal production to produce things like masks, ventilators, and hand sanitizer.

Image credit: *Holladay Distillery starts hand sanitizer production*

Some industries, however, are having a more difficult time than others. Many distilleries have stopped normal production to produce hand sanitizer. However, due to FDA regulations and the lack of supplies, distilleries are not able to get hand sanitizer out to the general public as quickly as they should be able to.

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> *The complication facing many distillers is denaturing, or rendering the base alcohol unfit for human consumption."*
>
> *–Why aren't distilleries making more hand sanitizer? Because FDA forces them to make their alcohol undrinkable first*

FDA regulations require hand sanitizer to be denatured, to prevent people from drinking it. This is done through additives that make it extremely bitter or otherwise undrinkable. Due to high demand, however, distilleries are having a difficult time obtaining isopropyl alcohol, the most common denaturant.

> *Locally, we've scoured the stores and most of the online sources are back-ordered. We'd be able to get sanitizer out*

much more quickly if this wasn't the case.

-Distiller Shawn Hogan

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Additionally, distilled alcohol that is not denatured (generally intended for human consumption) is taxed at a high rate. This means, even if the FDA regulations were removed the potential cost of the hand sanitizer could be much greater than if it was denatured. The $2 trillion stimulus bill signed on March 27th waived the excise tax for alcohol used in sanitizer until January 2021. However, the bill states that manufacturers must follow FDA guidelines that require a denaturant despite the World Health Organization's recipe that does not require a denaturant.

Sources:

- *Why aren't distilleries making more hand sanitizer? Because FDA forces them to make their alcohol undrinkable first*