

New CDC Guidance on Masks/Face Coverings

On Tuesday, November 10, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released a [scientific brief and guidance](#) on the use of masks. Previously, the guidance had stated that masks/face coverings prevented the wearer from spreading the virus to others. The new brief, based on multiple studies, states that mask wearing reduces the spread by controlling droplets released by the wearer ***and*** by blocking incoming droplets.

In short, ***the latest update says wearing a face covering doesn't just protect the people around you, but it also protects the wearer from incoming virus projectiles. The CDC has added to that guidance, saying masks also reduce inhalation of those droplets by the wearer.***

Studies show cloth masks can both block up to 50-70% of fine droplets and particles and limit the forward spread of those that are not captured. Upwards of 80% blockage has been achieved in human experiments that have measured blocking of all respiratory droplets, with cloth masks in some studies performing on par with surgical masks as barriers for source control.

Multiple layers of cloth with higher thread counts have demonstrated superior performance compared to single layers of cloth with lower thread counts, in some cases filtering nearly 50% of fine particles for the wearer, studies show.

The APWU supports the wearing of face coverings at work and in public. The spread of the virus can be slowed.