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**What do employees in an isolation ward and those in cleanroom production have in common?**

Both groups work in full kit. And what are the differences? The former wear their protective clothing to avoid becoming infected in a highly contagious environment, the others so as not to contaminate the sensitive and often life-saving products manufactured at

their workplace. It is between these two poles that the world itself turns – or stands still.

We are living in an age in which the corona virus governs virtually every area of public, and even much of private, life. The wave of canceled events, blocked deliveries and orders that has been piling up for weeks is unparalleled. What began with the (temporary) postponement of Chinaplas from April to

## Plastics Processors Are Suddenly Systemically Important

August, and now seems a far distant prospect, also set off a chain reaction over here.

The precautions taken to combat the rapid spread of the virus put an end to countless trade shows, congresses and business meetings. Production was brought to a standstill locally as companies whose employees tested positive were quarantined and supply chains were disrupted; meanwhile the stock exchanges virtually went into free fall. It is as though the corona virus has choked off the world's coronary arteries. We are becoming painfully aware of on what a fragile foundation our existence rests.

For our sector, there remains one realization: plastics processors are suddenly systemically important. Since, without a constant supply of respiratory masks, infusion sets, diagnostics equipment and other plastics products for emergency medical use – including protective clothing, of course – patient care faces collapse. Let us hope that it does not come to that!

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