



GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Abstract

Disaster Management Department – Surge in COVID 19 cases – Ensuring the availability of Medical Oxygen, Cylinders and associated matters - Removing bottlenecks - Orders issued

DISASTER MANAGEMENT (A) DEPARTMENT

G.O.(Rt)No.402/2021/DMD Dated,Thiruvananthapuram, 06/05/2021

Read 1 GO(Rt) No. 396/2021/DMD dated 03/05/2021

ORDER

The State is witnessing an unprecedented surge in COVID 19 cases. Medical Oxygen supply is essential for providing appropriate medical treatment for COVID 19 cases needing Oxygen support. Apart from oxygen beds in COVID and Non-COVID Hospitals (Public and Private), new oxygen beds are also being arranged in Covid Second Line Treatment Centers (CSLTCs) and some Covid First Line Treatment Centers (CFLTCs) too, to cater to the treatment of patients needing Oxygen support during the surge. Stress has been laid on the rational use of Oxygen.

2. Time is extremely critical in saving lives. Medical Oxygen cylinders should be turning around without delay. Artificial scarcity of cylinders should not happen owing to unethical practices or issues in management. There is a felt need to increase the availability of cylinders for filling and medical use of Oxygen during the surge in COVID 19 cases removing bottlenecks. Proper reporting of stock in the supply chain and at the user end by the persons managing them is critical.

3. Therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred under section 20 read with sections 24 and 65 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, the undersigned, in the capacity as the Chairman, State Executive Committee of the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority, in the interest of preventing mortality due to the lack of medical Oxygen supply during the surge, hereby issue the following orders with immediate effect:

- i. Time being critical in the supply of medical Oxygen, cylinders meant for medical Oxygen (full or empty) *shall not be hoarded anywhere by any person* so as to ensure the cycle of filling - use – refilling and quick turn-around to support the needy patients. No artificial scarcity shall be created through hoarding or other illegal means by any person or entity dealing with such cylinders.

- ii. *Black-marketing or unaccounted sale, profiteering by hiking the price at times of perceived scarcity and other unethical practices* while dealing with life saving Medical Oxygen or Cylinder is strictly prohibited.
- iii. Conversion of Industrial Oxygen Cylinders and non-toxic and non-flammable gas cylinders (Nitrogen, Helium and Argon) to Medical Oxygen Cylinders shall be done strictly following the SOP approved by PESO dated 22.4.2020 and subsequent orders issued by PESO in this regard, in order to augment the number of cylinders available for medical oxygen use. *Persons or entities holding industrial cylinders of the above kind shall hand them over to the District Collector, Chairman DDMA or the person authorised by the Chairman, at the earliest.* The DDMA's may take steps to requisition and collect / seize industrial cylinders of the above kind, convert as per SOP and use industrial cylinders (of industrial Oxygen, Nitrogen, Helium and Argon) for medical use.
- iv. All persons and entities in the supply chain and end users *shall properly report the stock of Oxygen to the authorities in Government as and when sought without omission* for the effective management of supply of Medical Oxygen in the State and cooperate with inspections by authorised persons.
- v. An Executive magistrate shall be posted by the District Collectors in all major Medical Oxygen storage facilities and Filling Stations to monitor the supply and distribution of Oxygen from these facilities.
- vi. Transportation of the Oxygen stocks from the storage facilities to districts via tankers shall be done as per the schedule approved by the Special Officer posted vide reference above.
- vii. A Green corridor shall be provided for the smooth and quick transportation of Oxygen Tankers and Vehicles carrying Oxygen Cylinders.

4. COVID19 is a notified disaster. Violation of the above directions and hoarding of medical Oxygen cylinders (full or empty), black marketing and profiteering through illegal ways, non-disclosure of stock of Oxygen when sought by authorities under the Government and holding on to industrial cylinders (of industrial Oxygen, Nitrogen, Helium and Argon) or hoarding or hiding them when requisitioned by DDMA or persons authorised by DDMA in this regard for emergency conversion and use for medical oxygen purpose, shall be offences under the Disaster Management Act, 2005. The DDMA's, Police, Department of Industries, Health and PESO may initiate steps against the violation of the these orders under relevant provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, Kerala Epidemic Diseases Ordinance, 2020 and other relevant provisions in law.

(By order of the Governor)
DR. V P JOY
CHIEF SECRETARY

To:

The Commissioner, Disaster Management

State Police Chief

All District Collectors

All District Police Chiefs

The Mission Director, National Health Mission, Kerala

The Member Secretary, Kerala State Disaster Management
Authority

Home Department

Health Department

LSG Department

I&PRD (Web & New Media)

Stock file/office copy

Copy to: - PS to Chief

Minister

PS to all Ministers

Special Secretary to Chief Secretary

PA to Principal Secretary (Revenue & DM)

Forwarded /By order

Section Officer