Consumer Awareness for COVID-19 Safety
Protect yourself, your family, and others through safe online shopping

U.S. Customs and Border Protection wants to help you and your family stay healthy and safe. Some foreign online sellers may be taking advantage of American consumers by charging high prices for counterfeit or substandard sanitation products and safety equipment. Follow these guidelines and be aware before you buy.

Risks to health and safety

Does your purchase meet safety guidelines?

Counterfeit or substandard respiratory masks and hand sanitizer are likely to be low-quality and dangerous. There are currently no at-home tests to diagnose COVID-19 or drugs to prevent or cure the disease that are approved by the FDA. Follow FDA guidelines for buying online.

What to watch out for

Is the seller legitimate?

Disinfectant supplies and protective equipment are limited everywhere. Be cautious if a seller can fulfill a large order; this could be an indicator of substandard or adulterated products. Some sellers may use false reviews to tricking you into buying fake, defective, and/or dangerous products.

Legal implications for everyone involved

Do you know who is getting your money?

It is illegal to purchase counterfeit goods. However, many people don’t realize that the creation of counterfeits can involve forced labor, human trafficking, or support other criminal enterprises, in addition to putting your own family at risk.

If you suspect a foreign vendor is offering adulterated or counterfeit merchandise, please report it to the Department of Homeland Security through our public e-Allegations and HSI Tips websites.

For more information contact ecommerce@cbp.dhs.gov

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