

# CDC Sent Useless Test Kits To States, Tainted With Coronavirus



Tainted test kits provided to the states by the CDC created huge inaccuracies in COVID-19 reports, exacerbating policies leading to further destruction of the U.S. economy. Who will hold these bumbling fools accountable for their actions? No one. □ TN Editor

As the new coronavirus took root across America, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sent states tainted test kits in early February that were themselves seeded with the virus, federal officials have confirmed.

The contamination made the tests uninterpretable, and—because testing is crucial for containment efforts—it lost the country invaluable time to get ahead of the advancing pandemic.

The CDC had been vague about what went wrong with the tests, initially only saying that “a problem in the manufacturing of one of the reagents” had led to the failure. Subsequent reporting suggested that the problem

was with a negative control—that is, a part of the test meant to be free of any trace of the coronavirus as a critical reference for confirming that the test was working properly overall.

Now, according to investigation results reported by The New York Times, federal officials confirm that sloppy laboratory practices at two of three CDC labs involved in the tests' creation led to contamination of the tests and their uninterpretable results.

## **“Just tragic”**

Shortly after the problems became apparent in early February, the Food and Drug Administration sent Timothy Stenzel, chief of in vitro diagnostics and radiological health, to the CDC to investigate what was going wrong. According to the Times, he found a lack of coordination and inexperience in commercial manufacturing.

Problems that led to the contamination included researchers coming and going from labs working on the test kits without changing their coats and researchers sharing lab space to both assemble test components and handle samples containing the coronavirus.

The CDC said in a statement Saturday to the Times that the agency “did not manufacture its test consistent with its own protocol.” Though the CDC appeared reluctant to admit contamination was at the root of the problem, the Times noted that in a separate statement the CDC seemed to acknowledge such problems, saying the agency has since “implemented enhanced quality control to address the issue and will be assessing the issue moving forward.”

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