

Rio Tinto laboratories produce hand sanitiser for Australian and New Zealand sites to help ease COVID-19 demand

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Rio Tinto Aluminium is developing hand sanitiser at on-site laboratories in Australia and New Zealand to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and ease growing demand for the product in local communities amid the pandemic.

Chemists and researchers at Bell Bay Aluminium in Tasmania, New Zealand's Aluminium Smelter (NZAS) at Tiwai Point and Yarwun Alumina Refinery at Gladstone have developed hand sanitiser formulas to World Health Organization specifications for on-site use.

At Bell Bay, a successful 5-litre test batch was made and ethanol has now been sourced to make an extra 75 litres of hand sanitiser. Manufacture of this next batch has started.

At NZAS, 103 litres of hand sanitiser has been produced and is already widely in use across the site, while at Yarwun a 5-litre test batch has been successfully developed.

Rio Tinto Aluminium Pacific Operations managing director Kellie Parker said "Our priority is the wellbeing of our people and the communities where we operate. Using the knowledge of our local teams to develop hand sanitiser in our laboratories can help protect Rio Tinto workers and reduce the spread of COVID-19, while at the same time easing the strain on supply for the local community."

Contacts

media.enquiries@riotinto.com
riotinto.com



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