



**City of North Richland Hills**  
7301 N. E. Loop 820  
North Richland Hills, TX 76180  
www.nrhtx.com

**Mary Peters, Public Information Officer**  
Phone: 817-427-6125  
E-Mail: mpeters@nrhtx.com

**For Immediate Release**  
November 10, 2009

## **Production of Surgical Masks & Respirators Returning to North Richland Hills**

(North Richland Hills, Texas) - Prestige Ameritech, L.P., the largest manufacturer of surgical masks in the United States, is expanding operations and moving to North Richland Hills. The company will occupy the facility at 7201 Iron Horse Boulevard starting in January 2010. The move will allow Prestige Ameritech to continue meeting the growing demand for surgical masks and respirators in the United States and around the world.

The North Richland Hills facility, where 87% of America's surgical face masks were once made, has sat vacant since Kimberly-Clark moved manufacturing and jobs to Mexico in 2001.

"We are thrilled to see this facility being re-occupied by a company that is working to protect our nation's health and security," said Mayor Oscar Trevino. "This is good for North Richland Hills and it is good for America."

Ninety percent of surgical masks used in the United States are currently made in other countries including Mexico and China. With recent threats of a global pandemic, Prestige Ameritech has become the largest domestic manufacturer of surgical masks and has outgrown its current facility.

Prestige Ameritech plans to occupy the 220,000-square-foot facility on Iron Horse Boulevard by January 31, 2010. The company will employ 400 plus workers by 2015 and will remain compliant with laws prohibiting the employment of undocumented workers. The City of North Richland Hills has provided an incentive agreement that will keep Prestige Ameritech and its 400 plus jobs in North Richland Hills for many years to come.

For additional information, please contact North Richland Hills Economic Development Director Craig Hulse at 817-427-6090 and Prestige Ameritech President and CEO Dan Reese at 817-595-1131.

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