



Recochem employees load up a shipment of hand sanitizer for distribution to the Daily Bread Food Bank, one of a wide range of charities who have received donations from the company. L to R: Jagdish Bhakta, head shipper; unnamed (possibly the truck driver); Brian Prendergast, senior VP, Americas (ret.); Russell Viera, shipping clerk; Derrik McClune, forklift operator.

NO ONE CAN DENY IT'S BEEN A TOUGH

year for all of us. From challenging economic conditions, to supply chain disruptions, to the difficulties and extra precautions required to maintain safe and COVID-free workplaces and showrooms – it's understandable that jobber firms would want to focus their attention on keeping their own businesses afloat and not look beyond that.

But by and large, that's not what has happened. A survey conducted by the AIA this summer showed that a sizeable number of aftermarket firms have answered the call and either repurposed their facilities to begin producing PPE and other COVID relief-related products, or donated PPE, supplies or cash to local community organizations in need.

Here's just a small sampling of aftermarket firms who, in both large and small ways, have helped with relief efforts in their communities. Especially in light of the possibility of continued challenges in the months ahead, initiatives like the ones taken by these companies is inspiring to all of us.

THE AFTERMARKET STEPS UP FOR COVID RELIEF

By Martha Uniacke Breen

RECOCHEM

As Canada's leading supplier of automotive fluids – antifreeze/coolants, windshield washer fluid, diesel exhaust fluid, performance chemicals, solvents, cleaners etc. – Recochem was identified as an essential service early on in the pandemic. At several of its facilities, the company switched to producing hand sanitizer, which it distributed to dozens of charities across the country. By the beginning of summer, it had already sent out some 25 pallets of sanitizer to recipients that included The Covenant House, Salvation Army, Moisson Montreal (Canada's largest food bank), the

Daily Bread Food Bank, and numerous other food banks, missions and shelters.

"The need for sanitizers has been strong for businesses and consumers, but also for those organizations serving those 'less fortunate' during this medical emergency," the company noted in a press release sent out to employees. "Charitable organizations such as food banks, shelters and child care facilities are all serving people 'in need,' with few resources, every day. Recochem has a history of helping others during any time of crisis. We're pleased to be able to make these donations to help support these charitable organizations across Canada."

This article was created in partnership with the AIA Canada. Throughout the AIA's business impact surveys into COVID it has also asked businesses what contributions and changes they have made to their business to aid their communities' efforts to battle the pandemic. The companies included here are based on responses received from the AIA surveys.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AUTO BODY, PENTICTON, B.C.

For Penticton, B.C.-based collision repair specialist Neighbourhood Auto Body, an unexpected discovery led to a spontaneous act of generosity. “We came across several boxes of N95 masks we didn’t need,” says owner/manager Paul Ash. “We didn’t even know we had them, just found them in the back. We had heard a lot of people were

in need of these masks, so we decided to donate them.”

Their first idea was to give them to a local hospital, but they quickly discovered there was a lot of red tape involved with making these kinds of donations, and they didn’t want to waste precious time.

Then they got an idea. “We decided to give them to our front end receptionist’s doctor’s

office.” It was a simple matter of running over the boxes to the medical facility in the car, and the masks were put to use right away.

“At the time, there was such a shortage of them that we knew it was tough for everyone,” says Paul, “so when we found out we had extra, we decided this would be a good use for them.”



Wendy Hill, director of resident and family services at Osgoode Care Centre, receives a cheque for \$1000 from John Stacey, co-owner of Stagra Automotive Ltd., Greely, Ont.

STAGRA AUTOMOTIVE LTD., GREELY, ONT.

Leigh Stacey and the folks at Stagra Automotive in Greely, a small community within the city limits of Ottawa, have always been strong community supporters – they’re the company that buys the frying oil for local Fries for Charity events, raising money for a range of community causes. When the pandemic hit last spring, the shop decided to donate \$1000 to Osgoode Care Centre, a local seniors’ home, for COVID relief.

Originally, they assumed the donation would be used for PPE, which was in short supply especially at the onset of the crisis. But Osgoode’s director of resident and family services, Wendy Hill, suggested it might provide a great opportunity to recognize the centre’s hardworking staff,

during one of the most stressful times in its history.

“They take really good care of their seniors there; they’ve had zero cases of COVID, which is really great,” says Leigh. “Lots of us have had friends and relatives at the centre, and it’s been an extremely sad and scary time. Some of the seniors with dementia don’t understand why their family isn’t visiting them, and it’s been especially hard on the staff.”

So local purveyor Stanley’s Olde Maple Lane Farms was hired to cater a sumptuous lunch at the centre in the staff’s honour. “They are usually a wedding and event centre, but everyone’s having to do different things just to keep going these days,” says Leigh. “And this was a way to keep things local as well.”

As Stagra celebrates its 48th year in business, says Leigh, “When the shutdown happened, it wasn’t the news that people wanted to hear, but the whole community has been really supportive to us. We saw this as a way for us to give back.”

Has your company donated supplies, cash or otherwise contributed to local COVID relief efforts in some way? We’d like to hear about it. Email us at info@jobbernation.ca.

DELPHI TECHNOLOGIES

Delphi employees around the world have been hard at work helping with local COVID relief efforts since the crisis began. As Delphi Technologies aftermarket VP sales Malcolm Sissmore detailed in a recent press release, “In China, our employees in Suzhou volunteered to help an industrial park neighbour boost production of protective masks from 50,000 to 200,000 in a single day.

“In North America, our U.S. teams worked with various vendor partners to donate medical supplies to area health care providers, including 89,000 pairs of nitrile gloves, partnering with TGIDirect in Michigan; 4,000 masks were donated to the National Guard in Indiana; and 3D printed clips were developed by an employee in New York to protect health care workers’ ears from mask chafing.

“In Europe, employees in the U.K., Luxembourg, and France have donated personal protective equipment and cleaning materials to local health providers. One U.K. team member, Jamirul, personally helped cook and deliver food to hospitals and charities with donations from a local restaurant.”