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SMART Union Local #17 hand-delivers 45,000+ COVID-19 mask pieces

May 15, 2020 - Construction Design & Engineering

Boston, MA Construction workers are going door-to-door across New England delivering a simple, critical tool to fight COVID-19: thousands of thin, metal strips. These strips are a key ingredient to making homemade masks effective at preventing COVID-19.

As volunteers across the region sew homemade masks, members of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation (SMART) Union Local #17 are backing them up by producing, donating, and hand-delivering metal nose strips to them.

Local 17 is fabricating and donating over 5,000 strips a day, allowing volunteers to produce just as many quality masks to fill the shortage faced by medical workers.

Renee Walker-Tuttle, a volunteer mask-maker in Portsmouth, R.I., is 37 weeks pregnant and sewing masks for the maternity ward she plans to give birth in. She shared her delivery from Local 17 on a Facebook mask-making group, writing, "While this interaction lasted five minutes I will always remember this act of kindness."

"We're proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our communities in the fight against COVID-19," said Bob Butler, business manager of Local 17. "We're committed to doing everything we can to help keep our neighbors and frontline medical workers safe."

Sheet Metal Workers Local 17 has donated over 46,000 nose pieces since last week, and they are preparing to meet the increasing demand in the weeks ahead.

Photo credit to International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540