

MEDIA RELEASE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2020

A PULSE OF THE WINDSOR-ESSEX ECONOMY - MANUFACTURING

Windsor-Essex County, Ontario, Canada – April 15, 2020 – Led by the [Canadian Association of Mold Makers](#) (CAMM) and [Automate Canada](#), the Manufacturing Committee of the Windsor Essex [COVID-19 Economic Task Force](#) has been extremely busy with three issues recognized in the industry. First, working with companies to help understand government financial supports to ensure employees can continue to work, or, if laid off, employees can access funding necessary for maintenance of personal livelihood. Second, working with local manufacturing companies that are continuing to supply product and programs to other industries that have been deemed essential. This bucket also considers the overall cash flow for companies, health and safety concerns, supply chain slowdowns, and decrease in overall demand. Third, working with companies that are attempting to pivot traditional manufacturing to support the proliferation of medical supplies.

The current economic outlook for manufacturing in the region is not positive as evidenced by the over 1,600 temporary layoffs as of April 17th and 97% of companies recognizing a decrease in revenue (with 60% citing a significant drop).

“The situation for manufacturers is challenging. We can’t sugar coat things, but we also aren’t sitting back wringing our hands. Everyone is in this together, so we gather data, we review, and we come up with short- and long-term action plans.”

~ Mike Bilton, Chair, Canadian Association of Mold Makers

Automate Canada Chair, Shelley Fellows, has noted that there are several companies that have shifted their production to help support the medical equipment and medical supplies. Additionally, there has been widespread cooperation across the region.

“We have industry and non-industry people at the table. That is our greatest strength – the teamwork and collaboration. And we have some top-notch organizations willing to share resources. We are definitely stronger together.”

Multiple companies outside of the tool, die, mold, and machining industry have also pivoted to support the national drive for medical supplies. Key competencies, skills, and techniques in manufacturing have allowed seemingly disparate manufacturers to shift to the creation of medical stock. Lee McGrath, Director of Business Retention and Expansion at WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation has been notified by over 50 companies that have immediately shifted to the production of the in-demand medical supply industry.

“The collaboration between companies within the ecosystem has been outstanding. Companies that were former competitors have teamed up to find solutions to challenges the entire country is facing. Our team at WE EDC has been inundated by over 150 contacts from companies or individuals who are looking to help or have capabilities that can support the greater effort.”

~ Lee McGrath, Director, Business Retention and Expansion, WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation

Moving forward plans have already been set in motion to help the recovery effort for the manufacturing industry. On April 16th, the Auto Parts Manufacturers Association (APMA) and the Business Development Bank of Canada are hosting a [webinar](#) to speak to some of the industries financial anxieties. CAMM and Automate Canada are also preparing a series of webinars to focus on economic recovery.

ABOUT THE WINDSOR ESSEX COVID-19 ECONOMIC TASK FORCE

The Windsor Essex COVID-19 Economic Task Force was established March 18, 2020 and is comprised of 40 members who represent a broad cross-section of industries in Windsor-Essex, Ontario Canada. The Task Force is sub-divided into six separate committees, each with upwards of 15 members.

The mission of the Windsor Essex COVID-19 Economic Task Force is to collect, coordinate and disseminate information on strategies, programs, and other remedies that are available to mitigate the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on the economic well-being of workers, entrepreneurs, businesses and the regional economy. The Task Force has, and will continue to, strategize and formalize re-ignition plans for their respective industries in the context of the overall Windsor-Essex, provincial and national economies. Learn more choosewindsor.essex.com.

QUICK LINKS:

- Canadian Association of Moldmakers - [COVID Impact Survey - Week 3 Results](#).
- Windsor Essex COVID-19 Economic Task Force released the results from its [COVID-19 Business Impact Survey](#).
- Learn more about the [Windsor Essex COVID-19 Economic Task Force](#), its structure, and past minutes.
- For more information and resources, visit [Resources for Canadian Businesses](#).
- APMA ,BDC & EDC webinar - [Coping with COVID-19: BDC & EDC Support Measures](#)

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