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CALIFORNIA MANUFACTURERS STEP UP WITH PPE PORTAL TO HELP GOV. NEWSOM RE-OPEN STATE'S ECONOMY

CMTA launches online tool to mobilize new wave of fabrication of safety equipment, allowing workers in all sectors to return to their jobs.

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SACRAMENTO, CA - Today Gov. Gavin Newsom announced a significant step intended to ease the process of putting California back to work. A partnership between the California Manufacturers & Technology Association (CMTA) and the State of California has created the "Safely Making California" Marketplace (SafelyMakingCA.org) to help fill a critical gap during the COVID19 pandemic. The program went online this week to connect CMTA member manufacturers and other manufacturers to employers who have the need to purchase non-medical grade Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

"We've been in discussions for the last few months to talk about how we can encourage California manufacturers to retool their assembly lines to help meet the needs for these critical products, that are non medical grade products, that can help support our effort in the state to keep people healthy and protect them as we work through this pandemic," said Governor Gavin Newsom.

"Today I'm very pleased that through this partnership with CMTA, and a new online portal called SafelyMakingCA.org, that we now have an online portal where people can match their talents, their skills, with their needs."

The Marketplace will be built out and improved over the next few weeks but it currently provides a directory of California non-medical grade PPE, such as face masks, face shields, gowns, gloves, sanitizer, and wipes.

"Manufacturers are the most critical piece to getting protective gear out to the wide range of employment sectors who need it," said CMTA president Lance Hastings. "These masks, shields, sanitizer and other non medical grade PPE will be made here in California, because after all, we are the 1.3 million hard working Californians who make things. As we reopen California's economy, and stay open during the push to find a vaccine, we need a system like this to link regional producers, buyers and information so the equipment gets made and delivered quickly. This pandemic has spurred great innovation and this system will unleash the great power and resiliency of California manufacturing in this crisis."

Many employment sectors have indicated over the past few weeks that protection equipment is their top priority for reopening and staying open. Hundreds of small to mid-size California manufacturers have indicated they would be ready to produce and supply gear for those sectors if they had a portal like this.

To help ensure manufacturers have what they need to stay operational to actually make the protective gear for other sectors, the site is also connecting the sector to the California Office of Emergency Services' program for allocated free PPE while their supplies last. There is a form for manufacturers to fill out to request face masks and sanitizer.

The overall online site will continue to evolve and improve. On that front, Intel is currently working with CMTA and the State to coordinate the project as it grows and becomes even more functional. "At Intel, our purpose is to enrich the lives of every person on earth," said Intel Foundation President, Pia Wilson-Body. "That's why we are excited to appoint two Intel employees, one full-time project coordinator and one part-time product engineer, to help CMTA manage and source non-medical personal protective gear. We believe we are stronger together and we are honored to do our part to ensure a safe reopening of California through CMTA's innovative model."

San Rafael-based Autodesk, a design and engineering software company, is also partnering to grant 300 free licenses for its cloud-based collaboration software so manufacturers can upload designs and specifications to the portal.

"Autodesk is invested in the health and safety of our community across California and the rest of the world, and we want to see a workforce with access to all the personal protective equipment it needs. The manufacturing industry can play a critical role in addressing the PPE shortfall to help workers stay safe as businesses re-open," said Lisa Campbell, SVP of Business Strategy and Chief Marketing Officer at Autodesk. "Connecting the right people with the right resources and technology in this kind of distributed manufacturing model will help us to more efficiently meet the demand for PPE among California's workforce. We're eager to work with the administration and our friends at the CMTA to tackle this problem."

For example, in the near future a Chico printer who wants to make face masks for the farming sector could get the specifications to make the masks, search for demand in the area and make a sale with a local company that indicated its need for its workers, all within the website.

Other key contributors to both the portal and the overall project include Interstate Plastics, Fictiv and Rancho Cordova based Tri Tool, where the press conference was held. These companies have been helpful in providing critical information about production and distribution of PPE, as well as a contributing story about ramping up production. See video here.

As "SafelyMakingCA.org" populates, evolves and gets used more, California's manufacturing community will play a key role in our economy's resurgence and the safety of our workers.

Key business leaders on the need for essential protective gear:

"We have seen more need and more education toward face coverings. It would be really nice for our employers to be able to go to one site, one portal, and tell them what they need." - Ron Fong, President/CEO, California Grocers Association

"As the economy ramps back up and the restaurants are bringing back their team members, there's going to be a huge need for essential protective gear in our industry." - Jot Condie, President/CEO, California Restaurant Association

"Because our members are really farm-to-fork, all the way through from the farm to the marketplace, the need is pretty deep in terms of the masks." - Emily Rooney, President, Ag Council

"The need is great. We're really excited to be able to share with our members the opportunity to tap into a good, strong predictable supply of those materials." - Dave Puglia, President/CEO, Western Growers Association

View Trade Association Leader comments here. "We want to thank Gov. Newsom's Administration for working with CMTA to bring this critical product together for California's economy," concluded Hastings. "This is an all-hands-on-deck situation, and we look forward to further coordination and cooperation to make the program operational."