



## Con Edison Creating a Shield Between Health-Care Heroes and the Coronavirus

April 17, 2020

### Company Donating Thousands of Face Shields To Protect Those on the Front Line

NEW YORK, April 17, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Con Edison is drawing on the expertise of its workers in a Bronx machine shop to manufacture 40,000 face shields for Westchester County health-care workers who are treating coronavirus patients.

The company today turned the first 6,000 plastic shields over to Westchester County Executive George Latimer and plans to make and donate the remaining shields by the end of the month. The county government will distribute the shields to hospitals and nursing homes.

"Our talented team of technicians, managers and engineers dedicate themselves every day to the health and safety of our region," said Tim Cawley, the president of Con Edison. "Strong, supportive collaboration with UAW Local 1-2 was key to this initiative. We're grateful that our skilled employees are able to help protect health-care workers, the women and men putting their own health on the line to heal and comfort others during the coronavirus emergency."

Latimer said: "I speak for all of us when I say 'Thank you, Con Edison.' We are grateful to your employees for turning their attention to protecting our frontline health-care workers. It is acts like these that perfectly capture the American spirit – New Yorkers protecting their neighbors when they need it most."

The manufacturing takes place in a vast, multi-purpose machine shop at Con Edison's yard in the Van Nest section of the Bronx.

Workers unfurl 500-pound rolls of thin, plastic sheeting and use a knife to cut the sheeting into eight-foot lengths. They lay 40 of those eight-foot-by-three-foot sheets on a piece of plywood and place another piece of plywood on top for stability.

The stack of sheets and plywood is fed into a machine with a robotic arm that fires a thin, high-pressure spray of water and garnet – which is the abrasive material on sandpaper – to cut the plywood and plastic sheets.

A sheet produces 12 shields. In less than three hours, the process makes 480 shields. Two shifts of workers are making the shields, stamping out 4,000 a day. The shields soak in a solution of water and Windex before being wiped cleaned and packed 600 to a box for shipping.

Each light-weight shield is one piece, with ties that hook behind the wearer's head to hold the protection in place. The shields are easy to clean, which makes them reusable.

Battling the pandemic has made clear the dire need hospitals and nursing homes have for personal protective equipment.

Several weeks ago, Chris Bentley, a section manager in Con Edison's Central Engineering group, and John Constable, a senior engineer, began discussing whether the company could design and make equipment health-care workers need. They found a design for the fabrication of a one-piece face shield that health-care workers wear.

They researched the material Con Edison would need to make the shields and decided they saw a match. A pilot run produced about 100 shields and went smoothly enough to convince the team to begin mass production.

While it's easy to feel frightened and helpless as the coronavirus affects colleagues, family members and friends, the project has lifted the spirits of the workers and planners.

"The folks working on this take great pride in it," said Nurrani Alli, a construction manager in Central Operations at Con Edison. "The fight against coronavirus requires a collective effort with every one of us contributing. We're happy to play a role by providing health-care workers with equipment they need to take care of us."

[Con Edison](#) is a subsidiary of Consolidated Edison, Inc. [NYSE: ED], one of the nation's largest investor-owned energy companies, with approximately \$13 billion in annual revenues and \$58 billion in assets. The utility delivers electricity, natural gas and steam to 3.5 million customers in New York City and Westchester County, N.Y. For financial, operations and customer service information, visit [conEd.com](#). For energy efficiency information, visit [coned.com/energyefficiency](#). Also, visit us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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