

Manitoba Companies Are Innovating to Help Fight COVID-19

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Bottom Line:

Manitobans are showing their mettle, stepping up big time in a time of crisis. In record time, we shifted much of our secondary and post-secondary education, and a sizable percentage of the workforce to working remotely. This was all part of the effort to enable social distancing (physical distancing) to flatten the curve.

Companies are pitching in to help deliver the goods and services need to expand the capacity of the Manitoba health care system. They are also working on vaccines and therapeutics that will eventually help bring this pandemic to a close.

Analysis

Times of crisis show what a community is made of. Will it rise to the challenge, or falter? **Our leaders, public service have been exhibiting the leadership that we need during these uncertain times.** They are listening to the business community leaders, as well as other key stakeholders. This is enabling the government to rapidly make changes aimed at helping Manitoba families and companies.

Shifted Business Model to Remote Work for Many Positions

Manitoba companies, organizations and their staff have not been sitting idle.

Just over three weeks ago, businesses and educational institutions shifted many of their staff to working online using tools like Office 365 (*including TEAMS and Skype*), the Google Suite, and Zoom. Video calls and conferences have helped keep teams working together from their home offices.

In Many Ways, People and Companies Are Pitching In

Companies have been pitching in spontaneously, but now the Manitoba Provincial Government is helping to formally organize these efforts to address the pressing needs of the healthcare system due to COVID-19.

On the Manitoba provincial government's COVID-19 [website](#), there are now two examples of this as of March 27, 2020.


First is the "[Help Next Door Manitoba](#)," which was put together by companies in the North Forge ecosystem. This allows those wanting to help other Manitobans to connect

with those needing help. This is a splendid example of software acting as a “matching mechanism”.

Thus, those in need can get [help](#) with Pickup/Delivery, General Tasks, Technology Help, Social Support, and Logistical Help.

The Manitoba provincial government needs several products and services. To help coordinate rapid procurement, they have put together a simple [form](#). This form allows companies to offer their products or services to the government in rapid and targeted manner.

Table 1: Products Listed in the Form on March 27, 2020









MB
Help Next Door MB

**Manitobans
Helping
Manitobans**

COVID-19 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

WE NEED YOUR HELP!
Are you a business able to supply products and services in support of Manitoba’s response to COVID-19:

Products	Services
Disposable N95 Masks	Guard/ Security Services
Disposable Surgical Masks	Nursing Services
Nitrile Gloves	Food Services
Vinyl Gloves	Laundry Services
Gowns	Accommodation Maintenance Services
Bottles of Hand Sanitizer	Personal Services
Cleaning Supplies	IT Support Services
Disinfecting Supplies	Pet Care Services
Laboratory Reagent	Transportation Services
	Consulting Services

[Media reports](#) are including stories of local companies shifting to different product lines to help. This includes luxury parka maker, [Canada Goose](#) making **hospital scrubs**. Local Distillers, such as [Patent 5](#) and [Capital K](#), and brewers such as [Farmery Estate Brewery](#) producing **hand sanitizer**. [Acryl Design](#) is making Plexiglas shields for use around pharmacy and post office counters in grocery stores.

BOMiMed, a **ventilator** distributor and parts manufacturer located in Winnipeg, secured parts, raw materials and supplies before COVID-19 hit Canada. They are busy filling orders from across Canada.

[Local veterinarians](#) are pitching in to help fight COVID-19 by sharing their **N-95 masks** with Manitoba's healthcare system.

There are likely many other such stories occurring in our province.

Companies and Organizations working on Therapeutics and Vaccines for COVID-19

Emergent BioSolutions, which has a plant in South Winnipeg, is working on therapeutics for COVID-19. See [Martin Cash's article in the WFP](#). These therapeutics may be ready as early as the end of summer.

The National Microbiology Lab in [Winnipeg](#) is playing a pivotal role in the COVID-19 pandemic as well. With ongoing testing and work to develop a vaccine.

EDW Contacts for Assistance or Inquiries:

- **For Winnipeg businesses looking for assistance accessing these new government programs, please reach out to our Yes! Winnipeg Team** through our [Help us help you](#) form if you are not sure who to contact on the Y!W team.
- For general inquires please email [wpg info at edwinnipeg dot com](mailto:wpg_info@edwinnipeg.com).
- For Marketing & Communications Inquiries, please email [marketing and branding at edwinnipeg dot com](mailto:marketing_and_branding@edwinnipeg.com).