



## Ohio Manufacturing Alliance to Fight COVID-19

*Repurposing and Retooling to Make PPE*

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# Ohio Manufacturing Alliance Coordinates Companies to Produce 750,000 Isolation Gowns

*PPE will protect workers in hospitals, nursing homes, and first responders*

**COLUMBUS, OHIO** – The [Ohio Manufacturing Alliance to Fight COVID-19](#) (OMAFc) today announced that Ohio firms have come together to produce 750,000 isolation gowns needed to protect frontline workers in hospitals, nursing homes and emergency services departments in local governments.

Isolation gowns, typically available through overseas sources, have been in short supply since the start of the pandemic. In addition, there has been a shortage of materials traditionally used to make gowns due to high demand.

“Finding innovative solutions is what Ohio manufacturing is all about,” said **Eric Burkland**, president of [The Ohio Manufacturers’ Association](#). “Through collaboration, manufacturers found an alternative solution to a complex, mission-critical product and pulled together a team to produce it at the scale needed to protect frontline workers.”

The OMAFC team evaluated numerous alternatives, with most ruled out because they would limit a worker’s mobility, fail to pass rigorous certification testing, pose cumbersome testing demands, or were unavailable in sufficient quantities.

“The team quickly found a solution in a type of plastic that is typically used for polyethylene bags and packaging,” said **Ethan Karp**, president and CEO of the [Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network \(MAGNET\)](#), the Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) in northeast Ohio. “The team created numerous design options, then solicited feedback from eight Ohio hospitals.”

MAGNET and OMAFC member [FastLane](#), the MEP for West Central Ohio housed within the University of Dayton Research Institute, took a lead role in solving a variety of design and production challenges. The design was certified by [Stress Engineering Services](#) of Mason.

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“We were pleased to learn from a hospital that our final design was even a slight improvement to gowns currently being used,” said FastLane director **Phil Ratermann**.

Facilitated by the OMAFC, companies across Ohio have repurposed and retooled to produce gowns, including:

- **Industry Products Company (IPC)**, Piqua;
- **Commercial Cutting**, Mansfield;
- **Sensical**, Cleveland;
- **Special Design Products**, Columbus; and
- **Coyne Graphic Finishing**, Mount Vernon.

“We are very proud of the work our people have done to help protect our health care workers – the frontline defense – from this horrible virus,” said IPC president Joe Blake.

For more information, visit [RepurposingProject.com](https://RepurposingProject.com). To find masks, gloves, personal protective equipment, and other related products, visit the [Ohio Emergency PPE Maker’s Exchange](#).

OMAFC is a public-private partnership formed to help meet the urgent need for more personal protective equipment (PPE) used by health care workers and first responders. OMAFC is led by The Ohio Manufacturers’ Association, the Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership (and its partner organization MAGNET), the Ohio Hospital Association, and JobsOhio, in partnership with the Ohio Development Services Agency, the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, and the Ohio Department of Health.

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