



## **Maryland's Beer Distributors: COVID-19 Community Response**

Maryland's beer distributors are local, family-owned, independent businesses that employ thousands of Marylanders in stable, high-quality jobs. In normal times, Maryland's beer distributors are the people working behind the scenes to get your beer where it needs to go—from the brewer to the place you enjoy or buy it. Together, Maryland's beer distributors employ almost 2,000 people across the state who work with local Maryland breweries to transport your favorite beers to neighborhood restaurants, bars, and package stores. Dawn to dusk, rain or snow, every week of the year, we work tirelessly to keep Maryland's beer economy—and the thousands of jobs that depend on it—thriving.

But Maryland's beer distributors are not only about business. Most of us are family-owned; we live, raise our families, volunteer, and socialize in the communities we serve. With our deep local ties and vast distribution networks, we have deployed our resources and expertise during this pandemic to help boost other local business owners, support first responders, and help vulnerable populations.

When COVID-19 hit and ground our local economies to a halt, Maryland's beer wholesalers stepped up to serve their communities in immediate ways and to support frontline workers.

In Baltimore, Chesapeake Beverage saw first-hand the impact stay-at-home orders were having on local restaurants, so they gave \$50 gift cards to all of their employees to use at local restaurants for carryout meals. B.P. Lesky Distributing started #takeouttuesday where they purchased lunch for their entire team at locally owned restaurants every Tuesday to help boost team morale, but more importantly, to support the local retail community. G&G Distributors on the Eastern Shore heard that many on-premise retailers needed cash to address immediate needs, so they offered to retrieve all draft and package beer that G&G represents and cut a check to the retailer within 24 hours.

Since Maryland's beer distributors have long-standing relationships with first responders, they sprang into action to address their needs. With many first responders lacking sufficient supplies of sanitizing products, Prince George's County-based Bob Hall Distributors purchased over 450 half-gallon bottles of hand sanitizer and donated them to police, fire, and EMT departments in Prince George's, Calvert and Charles counties. Chesapeake Beverage worked with one of their partners, Patapsco Distilling Company, to make hand sanitizer from excess beer, which was donated to first responders in the area. B.P. Lesky Distributing and Wantz Distributors donated beer to Tenth Ward Distilling to aid in the production of surface disinfectants that have been donated to frontline facilities such as nursing homes, medical facilities and police stations.

On Cinco de Mayo, G&G Distributors provided a much-needed morale boost while also supporting a local business. They sent meals from restaurant El Jeffe in Stevensville to the Queen Anne's County Sheriff's Office and the Centreville Police Department. Another teamed up with Kooper's Tavern in Baltimore and Guinness to provide meals to Johns Hopkins Emergency Room staff while at work. They also donated six-packs of Guinness Baltimore Blonde for the medical professionals to enjoy at home.

after their shifts—supporting frontline medical workers while boosting a local restaurant. And they've teamed up with a local restaurant group to hand out 500 food boxes to restaurant workers every Thursday.

Beer distributors' commitment to their communities runs deep; it infuses everything they do. Western Maryland Distributing created a server and bartender GoFundMe campaign that raised more than \$17,000 for local hospitality workers in Allegheny County. Katcef Brothers in Annapolis got their employees in on the action when they purchased electric sewing machines and enough materials to make 5,000 PPE masks. They then gave all of their employees opportunities during the workday to sew masks. The masks, which are being made for local medical professionals and underserved communities, have been delivered to Anne Arundel Medical Center, George Washington University Hospital, So Others Might Eat (SOME), and the city of Annapolis.

And on the Eastern Shore, Carey Distributors gave a six-pack of St. Archer Beer to frontline workers to show their appreciation during these long, tough days. Police officers, firefighters, EMTs, and hospital workers enjoyed a toast.

Beer distributors often say that our employees are not just staff, they are family. In this tremendous time of need, distributors are extending that notion of "family" to all of those who live, work, and serve in our communities and doing what we can to help them.

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