



**CICC** CONVENIENCE INDUSTRY  
COUNCIL OF CANADA

**CCID** CONSEIL CANADIEN DE  
L'INDUSTRIE DES DÉPANNEURS

### **Convenience Store Distributors Volunteer to Assist With Vaccine Distribution**

#### **CICC Answers Premier's Call For 'All-Hands-On-Deck' – At No Additional Cost To Province**

**TORONTO, ON – 9 March, 2021** – The Convenience Industry Council of Canada has put forward an offer to the Government of Ontario to use its members' existing transportation network to distribute vaccines throughout the province at no additional cost. With a distribution network that moves over \$55 billion in goods and services annually, a system is already in place to get to hard-to-reach communities, where the local convenience store is often the only shop in town.

On Friday, Premier Ford announced that essential workers in the convenience industry would be included in Phase 2 vaccinations, acknowledging the important role the convenience industry has, and continues, to play during the pandemic.

Since the outset of COVID-19, local convenience stores in communities across Ontario have been there as an essential service to ensure Ontarians could access basic necessities. Those essential items made it to store shelves in remote communities because of the distributors that are an integral part of the convenience supply chain.

Now, these distributors are offering to do what they do best, getting much-needed vaccines to hard-to-reach places. Trucks from CICC members Core-Mark International and Wallace & Carey already deliver high-value and highly-regulated products throughout Ontario, including the province's small and most remote communities. These trucks are tri-temperature, so can easily accommodate many of the vaccines as well as other critical medical and personal protective equipment.

Anne Kothawala, President and CEO of the Convenience Industry Council of Canada said, "Premier Ford and his team put out a call-to-action for the private sector to lend a hand. In addition to our front-line workers in local stores, our distributor members are here to help get vaccines from point A to point B. While we know attention is currently on securing vaccine supply as well as administering the shots to the public – our existing networks are the critical link between these two points."

In a letter responding to the offer, the Government's *COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force Secretariat* said that it is evaluating needs and, "We recognize that your industry has expertise in handling highly regulated products and we are grateful for your commitment to ensuring the health and safety of our communities."

This commitment is echoed by the CICC logistics members who travel to the corners of Ontario each and every day:

Dan Elrod, President, Wallace & Carey, said "We're a family-run and Canadian-owned business celebrating our 100<sup>th</sup> year – our team would be honoured to take on this task and I can't think of a better way to acknowledge our roots than by giving back to the communities we serve."

Eric Rolheiser, President, Core-Mark International said, "The size and scope of Ontario and its road system cannot be over-stated, especially during the winter and spring seasons. Our drivers are familiar with the routes and the local communities, and the deliveries are often the main source of produce and key supplies. We'd welcome the opportunity to be part of Ontario's distribution plan.

Kothawala continued, "Now that the vaccine supply is increasing, a challenge Ontario faces will be distribution, especially to small towns. We are hoping to be part of the solution as a critical link in the supply chain. I want to thank the Government of Ontario for considering our offer."

**Two examples of the communities served:**

- **Tehkummah** (population 436) is inland and houses the only remaining general store, which has been in operation since 1922. It operates today as a mainstay of the village.
- **Perrault Falls** (population 995) is located on Highway 105, approximately 70 kilometers north of Vermilion Bay. Along with the lodges dotted along the way, you'll find a restaurant, store and gas station.

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**IMAGES**

**Image 1** – The attached map of Northern Ontario shows the expanse of the areas CICC members serve, including nearly all locations that do not require fly-in delivery.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact:** Anne Kothawala, President and CEO, Convenience Industry Council of Canada at (647) 242-3560 or [akothawala@convenienceindustry.ca](mailto:akothawala@convenienceindustry.ca)

**ABOUT: Convenience Industry Council of Canada**

The Convenience Industry Council of Canada is a national, not-for-profit council that represents the convenience channel. Our members employ 216,000 Canadians and annually distribute and sell over \$55 billion in goods and services. On behalf of our 8,500 members in Ontario, we want to acknowledge that throughout the COVID-19 pandemic your government has worked tirelessly to protect the people of Ontario.