March 24, 2020

Local 18 Member,

The labor leadership of Local 18 and the contractor members of the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors’ Association of Milwaukee are committed to the health, safety and welfare of the members of Local 18.

We are partners in support of Governor Evers, legislative leaders and state agencies with their approach to protect the health and well-being of the citizens of the State of Wisconsin. To that end, and per the Emergency Order #12, Safer at Home, our contractor’s and our members will continue to provide essential services in the state, while educating our workforce to stay home if they feel unwell.

As you know, we are already taking precautions in accordance with the Center for Disease Control (“CDC”) and OSHA. Our job sites are unique workplaces with built-in social distancing and rigorous safety protocols.

Governor Evers’ order to exempt construction, critical trades, manufacturing for critical industries is consistent with other states that have issued “shelter at home” or “stay at home” orders. The work that you are doing in hospitals, manufacturing facilities, food and beverage production and distribution facilities, public works facilities and other spaces that are critical to operate efficiently and effectively during this pandemic, must continue. Even single-family or commercial construction sites could become a long-term risk to overall health and safety if left unfinished.
Ultimately, the decision to work is yours. You are encouraged to take all the precautions recommended to stay safe at work and at home. You are ESSENTIAL to the safety of our community. The work that you do is of the utmost importance and that is a reason why you are still called to work when others may not be.

Your safety is an absolute priority to the contractor. A contractor will not send you to work in an unsafe environment or require you to perform work that will put you at excessive risk due to the COVID 19 epidemic. You are encouraged to take precautions as recommended by the CDC and other health officials.

REMEMBER: Wash your hands; practice the state mandated 6ft social distancing; consider removing all work clothes and equipment before entering your home and washing them daily.

If you are uncomfortable that your jobsite is not providing you with the necessary resources please bring those concerns to your foreman’s attention. If you don’t feel you are receiving the feedback you deserve, bring that to your Local 18 Union leadership.

If the GC who is managing your site is not following the state-imposed rules of close contact and proximity, you do not have to participate in that jobsite. Again, refer that to your foreman and/or your Local Union. DO NOT SIMPLY GO HOME. Communicate your concern so that a safe place will be established for all.

There will NOT BE RETALIATION from a contractor should you choose to make your feelings known and/or choose to leave the jobsite.

The decisions made by Governor Evers are difficult. We appreciate his well-reasoned approach and commitment to the safety of the citizens and businesses of Wisconsin. We understand the importance of balancing public health with the need to support critical industries.

Through our partnership we will work to ensure we keep the power on, commerce moving, hospitals working, public works operational and construction projects safe.

Sincerely,

Michael Mooney
President/Business Manager
SMART - Local 18

Jonathan Kowalski
Executive Director
SMACCA Milwaukee
SMART Local 18 COVID-19 Update

Safety is at the center of all we do at Sheet Metal Workers’ Local #18. As information about the new Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) continues to evolve, we are committed to taking preventive measures to reduce the risk to our membership, their families and their communities while providing the essential services you depend on.

To date, we have taken the following steps:

Our employees are proactively following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, including:

- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoiding touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Covering a cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in the trash. If no tissue, sneezing or coughing into elbow, not hands.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

We have emphasized the need for our staff to avoid close contact with large groups and anyone who appears sick.

We understand the uncertainty you may be experiencing with this situation and encourage you to help us in limiting the spread of COVID-19, by practicing these safety measures for yourself and your families.

As we have seen over the past few days, conditions with COVID-19 are rapidly changing. We continue to work with medical experts and monitor updates from the World Health Organization, the CDC, the Centers for Public Health, and State and Local Health Agencies on a frequent basis.

Through these unprecedented times, our focus remains on providing you with safe and reliable representation and service.

Thank you. It is through all our collective efforts that we can reduce the risk to each other.

Sincerely,

Mike Mooney  
President/Business Manager  
SMART Local Union #18

MM/cw  
opeiu #9, afl-cio