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Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago, Sheet Metal Workers' Local Union 73 Launch First Annual 'Warm the Metro' Initiative

CHICAGO, Ill. (December 15, 2020) – Through the month of December, low-income homeowners in Chicago and Chicago Heights are receiving free furnace and boiler tune-ups to keep them safe and warm during the coming winter season. This initiative is a result of a new partnership between Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago, Sheet Metal Workers' Local Union 73, and SMACNA Greater Chicago.

When the risks affiliated with COVID-19 limited Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago's ability to perform interior home repair, the organization met the challenge by broadening the services provided to the families and elderly homeowners they serve. As part of this transition, Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago led an outreach effort with the intent of assessing their clients' unique needs, while providing valuable referrals and connections to other resources in the community. From ensuring food security, to providing PPE, Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago has responded to the crisis by providing a safer, more secure home environment for area residents.

The most recent element of this shift, a partnership with Sheet Metal Workers' Local Union 73 and SMACNA Greater Chicago provided warmer, safer home environments for low-income families in preparation for winter. This new initiative, called Warm the Metro, enlists Union members and local HVAC contractors to visit more than 50 homes, providing free tune-up services on boilers and furnaces.

"Furnace and boiler tune-ups are exactly the type of support our homeowners need in order to safely shelter in place through the winter. This partnership is ideal for the current times, as we can provide important home maintenance services while keeping our clients socially distant and protected from exposure," said Wanda Ramirez, CEO of Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago.

In addition to providing improved heating efficiency, safety, and indoor comfort, a regular furnace tune-up can spell the difference between a five- to 10-year to a 15- to 20-year life expectancy for the heating system. To complete the tune-ups, Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago partnered with South Suburban Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc, and RD's HVAC, Inc. for the Warm the Metro initiative.

"The men and women of Sheet Metal Workers' Local 73 have a long history of giving back to our community", said Local 73 President & Business Manager Raymond Suggs. "We are proud to work with Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago to Warm the Metro in preparation for winter. The danger posed by COVID-19 makes it more

important than ever to have a safe, warm, comfortable home to protect residents' health and safety this winter. We look forward to future partnerships with Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago and continuing to provide and give back our services to those in need."

"SMACNA Greater Chicago is proud to be a partner of Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago. Any opportunity for our Local 73 contractors to share their knowledge and expertise to help improve local neighborhoods is an honor," said Joe Passannante, President of SMACNA Greater Chicago. "Our partnership with this invaluable nonprofit will not only help provide critical home repairs for people in need, it's also a great way to give back to the community that supports our local contractors."

Click [HERE](#) for a Warm the Metro image gallery.

Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago repairs homes and revitalizes communities in Chicago and suburban Cook County. Since 1991, we have repaired 1,900 homes and 285 community facilities, with the assistance of tens of thousands of volunteers. We work in partnership with neighbors, community leaders, trade unions, service clubs, companies, and volunteers to improve Chicagoland homes and neighborhoods. Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago is an affiliate of Rebuilding Together, Inc., a national nonprofit organization. Follow @RTMetroChicago on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) or visit rebuildingtogether-chi.com.

Chartered in 1892, SMART **Sheet Metal Workers' Local Union 73** is dedicated to maintaining the highest skilled workforce in the Chicagoland area. With more than 4,400 members, we provide services to all of Cook and Lake Counties. Our members are experts in the industry who are committed to the highest standards of safety and professionalism. For more information, visit <https://www.smw73.org/> or <https://www.facebook.com/sheetmetal73/>

SMACNA Greater Chicago provides a common voice in legislative issues and labor relations for contractors involved with heating, ventilating, air conditioning, architectural sheet metal work, pollution control, materials handling, roofing, testing and balancing, and retrofitting. SMACNA Greater Chicago provides its members with the latest training, information, and services vital to maintaining their edge in the sheet metal industry. Visit <https://www.smacnagreaterchicago.org/> for more information.