



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Survey Exposes Unprecedented Impacts of COVID-19 on an Important and Essential Service for Canadians**

May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, Ottawa (Ontario) – The Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada (HRAI) released today the results of an industry survey which found drastic impacts on the heating, refrigeration, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) industry in Canada due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The HVACR industry has been deemed an essential service by both the federal government and provincial governments across the country” said Sandy MacLeod, President and CEO of HRAI, “and the sector has been responding as needed to the COVID-19 pandemic by continuing to service important equipment in both residential and commercial buildings.”

Despite their status as an essential service, the HRAI survey found that over 67% of HVACR companies in Canada have seen a reduction of more than 30% in year-over-year revenues since March 15<sup>th</sup> and about 27% have experienced a greater than 60% decline. Most contractors, however, have not substantially reduced their workforce. More than 60% of businesses have seen layoffs of less than 30% and almost 30% of them have done no layoffs at all.

“The majority of companies in the sector have kept their employees on board, despite losing a significant portion of their revenues. This is due in part to the need for companies to continue servicing Canadians and businesses and also due to the availability of federal government programs that have helped companies make ends meet, for which the sector is grateful” continued MacLeod.

The industry has begun discussions with different levels of government regarding the rollout of targeted programs that would stimulate economic growth and job creation by supporting energy efficiency and low-carbon upgrades to homes and buildings. Strategic programs of this type will not only provide assistance to small businesses and homeowners across the country, but will also help Canada to meet its ambitious carbon reduction goals.

As much as possible, HVACR industry members are using the down time created by the pandemic to train workers and to prepare their businesses to be part of the economic recovery that will come, ensuring that Canadians comes out of this crisis stronger than ever.

“Programs that incentivize Canadians and businesses to acquire more energy efficient equipment will help to lower costs for energy consumers and help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Skilled trades development will be more important than ever once we begin recovering from the pandemic. While the industry has been dramatically affected in the short term, we are ready to rebuild Canada’s economy, create employment opportunities and support climate change goals” concluded MacLeod.

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#### **About HRAI**

Founded in 1968, the Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada (HRAI) is a non-profit national trade association that represents more than 1,150 member companies in the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) industry. Our members include manufacturers, wholesalers and contractors who employ more than 50,000 people in Canada and represent an industry that delivers more than \$7B annually to the Canadian economy.

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