

# The Citizen <sup>of</sup> Laconia

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## Local company expands military support program



**SOLDIERS DAVE BERRY and Bob Smith thank Maine Oxy for their M.O.S.T. care package. COURTESY**

BELMONT — Maine Oxy, New England's leading supplier of welding supplies and industrial gases, is taking a unique approach to supporting deployed troops.

The Maine Oxy Supports the Troops program allows employees, community members, and other local businesses to join forces to make large care package donations to members of the military on active duty in war zones.

With 13 corporate donation sites across New England, including in Belmont, Maine Oxy hopes local communities will help them reach their new goal to send out 50 care packages a month.

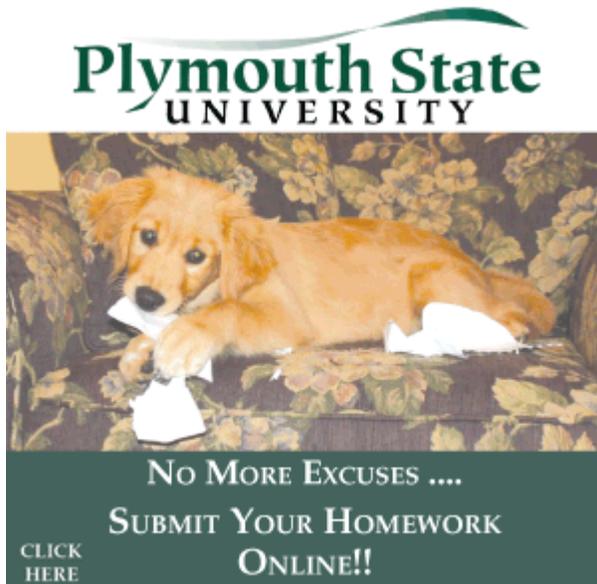
According to Bob Smith, a former member of the military and head of the M.O.S.T. program, now is an important time to ask people for their support.

"With the recent announcement of the Iraqi withdrawal, many people assume that all the troops are coming home soon," Smith said. "We want to make sure people know that many troops are still being deployed and serving in war zones. These people need our help."

The M.O.S.T. program began as an internal effort at Maine Oxy to send care packages to their own employees deployed in 2004.

After seeing the impact of hand written letters, food, and hygiene product donations, Maine Oxy decided to expand the program to collect and send donations to as many troops as they could.

The impact of the care packages is seen in the countless emails Maine Oxy receives from thankful troops overseas. Staff Sergeant Matthew Hamilton shared the following after receiving a M.O.S.T. package:



“You guys may not realize how much it means to a soldier to have perfect strangers take the time out of their busy lives and put some thought into something for a service member,” Hamilton said in an email. “It could be something as small as saying ‘thank you,’ and it means the world to us. It is the main reason we, as soldiers, marines, airmen, [and] seaman, have the drive to continue when times get rough and home seems a million miles away.”

In the next few months, Maine Oxy plans to increase the amount of care packages shipped overseas by asking the community for small donations and asking local businesses to set up their own M.O.S.T. drop boxes.

Last December, all 13 Maine Oxy locations and a group of partner businesses including Moody’s Collision Centers, Agren Appliance, and Morgan Stanley Smith and Barney LLC, were able to send five shipments a month to those on deployed missions, helping hundreds of individual service men and women.

Local businesses interested in having a drop box may contact Maine Oxy customer service at 1-800-377-9433 or email [ausalesteam@maineoxy.com](mailto:ausalesteam@maineoxy.com).

M.O.S.T. drop boxes can be set up inside any store or local business that wants to partner with Maine Oxy. Donations to help pay for shipping costs are welcome.

Those who would like to help individual troops may bring donations of nonperishable food items; entertainment items; health and hygiene supplies; and letters to the nearest M.O.S.T. drop box.

Examples of nonperishable food are powdered drink mixes, nonperishable snacks, and canned meats and pasta. Entertainment items include batteries, books and magazines, playing cards, pens, and stationary.

For information about where to find a drop box and specific items the troops need visit <http://www.maineoxy.com/most>. htm .

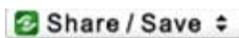
In addition to Belmont, drop boxes are located in the New Hampshire communities of Hooksett, Hudson and Lebanon; the Maine communities of Auburn, Brewer, Rockland, South Portland, and Waterville; the Massachusetts communities of Chicopee and Milford; and the Connecticut communities of South Windsor and Waterford.

Maine Oxy is New England's leading supplier of welding supplies, industrial and specialty gases, and innovative industry solutions.

Founded in 1929 in Auburn, Maine, the company originally provided service to home propane customers. Over the past 80 years, Maine Oxy has grown from its modest beginnings into a sales and manufacturing leader operating in 13 locations across New England. Maine Oxy is well known for its commitment to creating environment friendly products and its role in establishing the New England School of Metalwork. Maine Oxy, an employee owned company, is dedicated to providing the most current technologies at competitive prices, while also engaging in a variety of initiatives to better the communities in which they operate.

For more information visit [www.MaineOxy.com](http://www.MaineOxy.com) or call 1- 800-377-9433.

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