

THE FIRST SHOT



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER DEVOTED TO THE PEOPLE OF EMPIRE DIE CASTING

SPRING 2005 NUMBER 26

We're all in this Together!

By: Paul Head, V.P. of Operations

In today's rapidly changing global market, it has become quite evident that the fundamental way we do business and approach quality must continue to improve or we will be eliminated. At Empire Die Casting Co., Inc., we are continually striving to create quality product and ensure customer satisfaction to stay competitive. Procedures and rules throughout our organization set the foundation for continuity in the manufacturing process. While not apparent to many, control of the entire manufacturing process is how quality is achieved - and reduces cost to the customer by increasing efficiency for the manufacturer. Simply put, quality is the key to success. For this reason, quality is a bigger part of everyone's job today than ever before.

Every employee must take an active role in all aspects of the manufacturing process. This can only be accomplished through training, communication and commitment. ISO is no longer just a quality program at Empire Die Casting Co., Inc.; we have expanded ISO into a comprehensive business model used in our everyday tasks. A product of this concept is Our Quality Intranet. An online resource providing fast, convenient access to current forms, procedures, and work instructions, the Intranet guarantees the information needed for the job is at hand. In the spirit of efficiency improving quality, we're embarking on an ambitious plan to implement visual work instructions and quality inspection data throughout the facility, allowing castings to be checked quickly and accurately at each step of the manufacturing process. We're also making available in every production department Empire Die Casting Co., Inc.'s five core objectives. Positive headway on these objectives (PPM, scrap, rework, \$/person, and uptime vs. plan) equals positive results for our processes, quality of product, and customer satisfaction. Our progress is posted and maintained so all employees can see the results of their efforts. And to make sure we're all utilizing these tools, Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. has something we've never had before: a Production Trainer, dedicated to improving communication. Considering the time and money invested in our quality systems, it's pretty clear Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. has made a commitment to quality.



Dennis Eblen inspects a casting.

We as a company have made progress, but we still have a long way to go. All of us must be responsible for the quality of our product. At Empire Die Casting Co., Inc., we know quality isn't something that just happens or can be forced into existence but is the result of training, communication, and commitment. Remember, we all belong to the quality department, and we're all in this together!

Electrical Study Improves Efficiency

Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. is continuously researching energy efficient manufacturing solutions. The latest study was conducted by our cost accountant, Ken Simko, along with the assistance of Ohio Edison and Empire's Maintenance Department.

Ken analyzed electric readings every half hour of every day for a six month period, totaling 8,640 monitored time periods. This data was gathered in an effort to obtain an average of our electrical usage and then identify the times at which the most electrical usage was occurring. Ken concluded that our peak time ranged between 8:00-11:30 am on average.

Since the study, electrical consumption has been decreased by shutting down manual die cast machines, punch and trim presses and extractors during break and lunch periods. We now have to research what electrical equipment is contributing to a high percentage of kilowatt hours during peak electric times. Keep up the good work, Ken!

News from the Desk of our ISO / Safety Administrator

- The BWC (Bureau of Workers Compensation) recently announced that participants of the Incentive Program like Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. will receive a 4% discount for Fiscal Year July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006. This will be a significant increase from the Fiscal Year July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005 concession of 2%.
- Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. is now a member of the Summit County Safety Council; an organization that promotes safety and accident prevention in the workplace by offering educational and informational opportunities to companies in our community. Membership requires monthly meeting attendance and offers participants a 2% discount on their Workers Compensation premium.

NEW ARRIVALS

- Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. is in the process of installing a Chemetron FM-200 fire suppression system in our server room. This system will replace the existing standard sprinkler system in an effort to prevent data loss during the extinguishing of a fire. The fire suppression system works by expelling fire containing chemicals instead of water. Investing in this equipment will prevent data loss by allowing for quick response and recovery in the event of a fire.
- The latest addition to our secondary department is a Brother TC-32B BT-30 CNC Drilling and Tapping Machining Center. This is part of Empire Die Casting Co., Inc.'s commitment to improving technology.

Supplier Salute



Kimpton Printing is a full service printing and design company, established in 1987. The four primary divisions within the company, Design, Offset Printing, Silk Screen and Ad Specialties, work together efficiently to provide clients with complete service from conception to production and delivery. They are a multi-faceted and experienced company that has brought many new and innovative ideas to our company; from the design and print of our new sales pamphlet to the printing of this newsletter. For more information, please contact:

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EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Mike Spicel has been with Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. for over 36 years, beginning on August 5, 1968. Over the years, he has worked as a Degator, Operator, Set-up Person, and Zinc Foreman. Mike is presently Manufacturing Manager of both the aluminum and zinc foundries.

Mike resides in Macedonia, Ohio with his wife, Ann, two daughters, Kerri and Marcie, and grandson, Bennett. Ann is a registered nurse at the Cleveland Clinic. Kerri, 29, is an aspiring musician due to release her first CD this summer and Marcie, 27, is the mother of 4 year old Bennett and is a professional barber. Oldest daughter, Kimberly, 34, was just married in Nassau, Bahamas this past October. The Spicel family enjoyed a beautiful, tropical wedding and mini-vacation all in one.



Some of Mike's hobbies include reading, watching football, and doing yard tasks.

Ask anyone at Empire and they will tell you Mike is an avid Browns fan; he often sports a brown, orange, and white hard hat to support his team.

This spring and summer, Mike and Ann plan on enjoying the nice, warm weather, spending time with family, and relaxing. With a trip to Orlando planned, we think he will get plenty of rest and relaxation. Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. is lucky to have Mike as a part of our team...keep up the good work!

On the Move



Gary Larimer is assuming the responsibilities of Aluminum Foundry Foreman as well as his current responsibilities as Shot Blast Supervisor.

Wonna Sehzue, effective May 1, 2005 is **FINALLY** moving to first shift and continuing the responsibilities of Zinc Foundry Foreman.

Mike Gayelit, effective May 1, 2005 is being promoted to second shift Zinc Foundry Foreman.

The Winner's Circle

Be sure to look for your picture on the PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) Winner's Circle display by the employee entrance. This display acknowledges employees that are demonstrating the proper usage of protective equipment like ear plugs, hats, and safety glasses. Many thanks to those employees that are thinking safe at all times!

THINK SAFETY

Retiring...

Rick Scheall retired as of April 1, 2005. He was with



Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. since March 30, 1981.

Rick began as a Degator in the aluminum foundry and over the years worked his way up to Light-Up Man on third shift.

On behalf of Empire Die Casting Co., Inc., we would like to thank Rick for twenty-four years of hard work and dedication and wish him and his family the best of luck and happiness.

After nineteen years of service with Empire Die Casting Co., Inc., **Clifford Jones** retired as of April 29, 2005. He began his employment with Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. on February 25, 1986 as first shift Set-Up Man, a position he held for the length of his career. Clifford also achieved perfect attendance for fourteen years straight! Good luck to Clifford and his family...we wish you well!



News Flash!

It is with great pleasure we announce our new Preferred Rate Program with La Quinta Inns & Suites, Baymont Inns & Suites, and Woodfield Suites. This Program offers Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. employees and associates a 15% discount off the already reasonable standard room rates. This substantial discount is available for business or leisure travel at any of the nearly 600 properties nationwide. Whether you're making a sales call or taking the kids to visit grandma, a participating property is nearby! With many of these hotels offering amenities like continental breakfast, swimming pool, and internet access, your trip is guaranteed to be comfortable as well as affordable.

Frequent guests of any and all of the three brands - La Quinta, Baymont, and Woodfield Suites - are rewarded through one convenient program, Returns™. Every dollar spent earns you points, which can be redeemed for free stays, gift cards to national retailers and restaurants, even a round of golf or tickets to an amusement park. Returns™ members can also earn airline miles with several major airlines. Join today at www.yourreturns.com, or call 1-800-642-4258.

For reservations, contact La Quinta at (800) 531-5900 or Baymont at (877) BAYMONT and ask for the EMPIRE DIE CASTING preferred rate. Reservations can also be made online at www.lq.com or www.baymontinns.com using promotional code EMPIRE. Happy Travels!

TRADE SHOW TRAIL

Wisconsin Expo Center

June 8-9, 2005

Tampa Convention Center

October 12-13, 2005

Greater Chicago-St. Charles

October 22-27, 2005

Performance Racing Show-FL

December 1-3, 2005

The First Shot is written and published quarterly by the employees of Empire Die Casting Co., Inc., an Employee-Owned Company.

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