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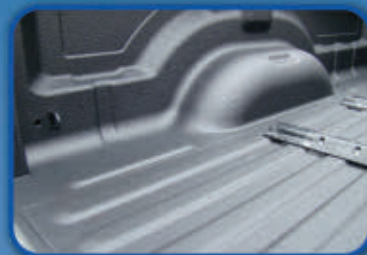
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ON THE COVER p36
Best practices for the installation of SPF, like the PPE seen in our cover photo, are industry-wide priorities. *PHOTO COURTESY of Icyne*

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WELCOME TO THE MARCH/APRIL 2015 ISSUE OF SPRAY FOAM MAGAZINE

If it's worth doing, it's worth doing right. This phrase is firmly lodged in my brain, a consequence of careless lawn mowing, among other responsibilities, when I was a teenager (I'm most likely not alone in this regard). Sure, the phrase is cliché, but this particular truism is nevertheless useful in virtually every context, and it rings especially true in the spray foam industry.

Spray foam offers a wealth of complexity, from the installation process to the product itself, and anything less than a superb application can put owners and occupants at risk, as well as undermine the industry as a whole. Proper execution is an industry wide

concern, and this sentiment has been echoed by manufacturers, industry organizations, and regulatory agencies alike. Our March/April 2015 Issue is also joining that chorus.

In the following pages, we'll dive into the importance of following job site checklists and complying with building codes for fire protective coatings, and how the latter can benefit your business's bottom line. This issue also digs deeper into the business side of spray foam operations by detailing strategies for maximizing your company's profitability and thriving in your first year in business. On the subject of equipment, we see some general considerations for equipping your

rig, as well as hear from contractors who've opted for rig versatility.

We've also included a few unique projects, including a commercial insulation job at a Coca-Cola facility, and a residential insulation job accessed via barge. To top things off, we review the goings-on at the Sprayfoam 2015 Convention & Expo.

Thanks for reading, and remember: foam for our future.



Ryan Spencer
Editor-In-Chief

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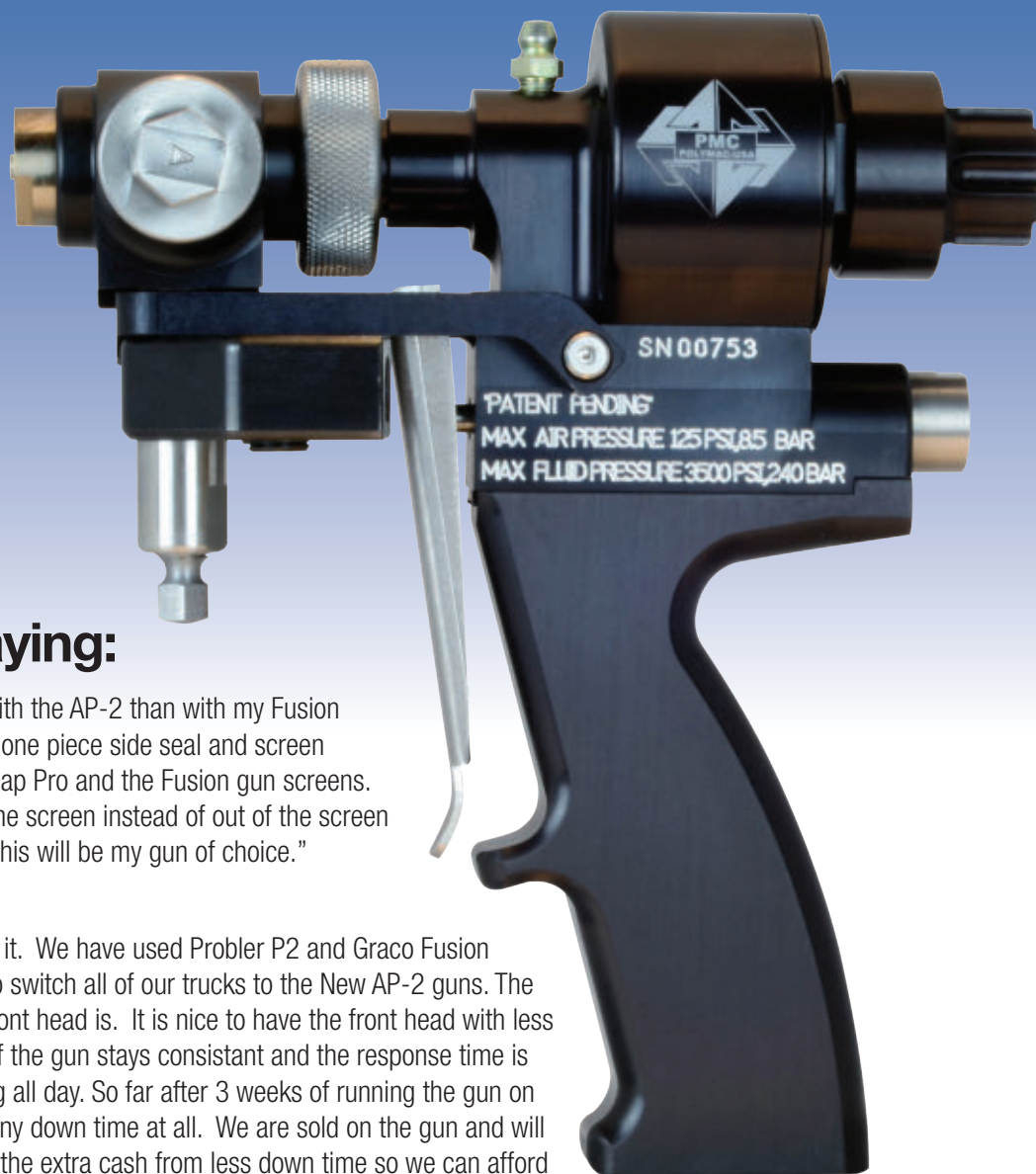
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Jason Z.

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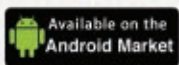
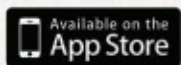
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Overview of EPA Checklists

While working with spray foam, there are always potential risks and hazards that can occur unexpectedly. Therefore, it is important for SPF workers to be prepared for every step before, during, and after a spray foam application. To facilitate this process and comply with the job requirements, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offers checklists that contractors should utilize on the job. While these checklists are not regulatory compliance tools, they may be considered best practices under local, state, or federal worker protection or other regulations.

CONTRACTOR SAFE WORK PRACTICES

In an ongoing fashion, EPA suggests that contractors should maintain an on-site contractor's safety plan that meets all OSHA, local, and state requirements, as well as an on-site binder of Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) that the workers should familiarize themselves with. Contractors should also keep records of everything from material names to equipment maintenance to ensure quality work in the future. EPA also stresses the importance for SPF project managers, installers, and assistants to acquire testing training certification from organizations such as SPFA or CPI. Being certified indicates that

the employee has been thoroughly educated on the proper application of SPF.

Before moving forward with an SPF job, project managers should conduct a pre-job assessment that identifies health and safety risks, environmental conditions, and a safe work zone. Project managers also need to ensure that all crewmembers are wearing PPE to avoid exposure to chemicals, and verify whether a supplied air

system is required for the job. Crewmembers should make sure they see everyone else has vacated the area, that HVAC systems are turned off or isolated, and that all openings are covered with plastic sheeting to mitigate overspray. Crews should check to see if their equipment is heated up to the required temperature and conduct a test spray to check foam quality and make any adjustments before carrying on.

(cont'd on the next page)



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While spraying, SPF installers should always work with an assistant and maintain a line of sight or direct communication with the assistant. Installers should apply the SPF in lifts, allowing enough cooling time per pass while following the manufacturer's instructions and foam depth specifications. The crew should have a ventilation system in place during and after the application and ensure that the ventilation exhaust areas are clear of people and objects that could be contaminated.

After the installation is completed, the crew needs to clean up the area, dispose of any waste, remove all the masking, and restore HVAC settings. The contractor can then establish a proper re-entry time for other trade workers, residents, or building occupants.

Checking off these crucial steps ensures that the SPF application is done correctly and any potential risks therein are significantly reduced.

CONTRACTOR-CLIENT COMMUNICATION

As important as safety is in the SPF workplace, the communication between client and a professional SPF contractor is also paramount in preserving SPF's reputation as an optimal insulation material. Therefore, EPA created an additional checklist that enables the contractor and the client to see eye to eye.

For the client and the contractor to be on the same page, the contractor should provide certification credentials, followed by an overview of the work that will be performed. The client should be




The communication between client and a professional SPF contractor is also paramount in preserving SPF's reputation as an optimal insulation material.

informed of SPF's safety risks and the precautions the contractor takes to avoid those risks. The client should be made aware that the work area will be restricted to other workers and occupants, the area will be ventilated during the installation, and the crew will wear proper PPE.

Before the client leaves the site, the client and the contractor should determine an area for the workers to change in and out of their PPE. Additionally, the client should provide access to bathrooms near the work area, if possible.








If the contractor's communication with the client is successful, then the client will know what to expect and, in turn, feel more secure in his decision of choosing spray polyurethane foam insulation.

For more information, please visit www.epa.gov.



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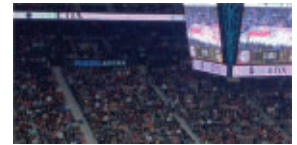
Demilec Reformulates Popular APX Spray Polyurethane Foam Insulation



Demilec, one of North America's largest manufacturers of spray foam insulation and polyurea products, has revamped the formulation of its popular APX low-density spray foam insulation to dramatically improve yield, reduce waste and decrease the time required for application.

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Foametix Hits Nothing But Net During Atlanta Hawks Game



Foametix recently made its presence known at Atlanta's Philips Arena, as they were one of the main sponsors for the Atlanta Hawks vs. Cleveland Cavaliers on December 30th, 2014. A jumbotron feature, banners on the mezzanine level, and game shirts featuring Foametix' logo were some of the ways the SPF manufacturer was showcased during all four quarters.

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Chip Holton Named President of NCFI Polyurethanes



Holton joined NCFI as Dir. of Operations in 2012, and brings with him an extensive, and impressive operational leadership background. Holton, 50, holds an engineering degree from The United States Military Academy at West Point and is a former US Army infantry officer.

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Fomo Names New Vice President of Technology

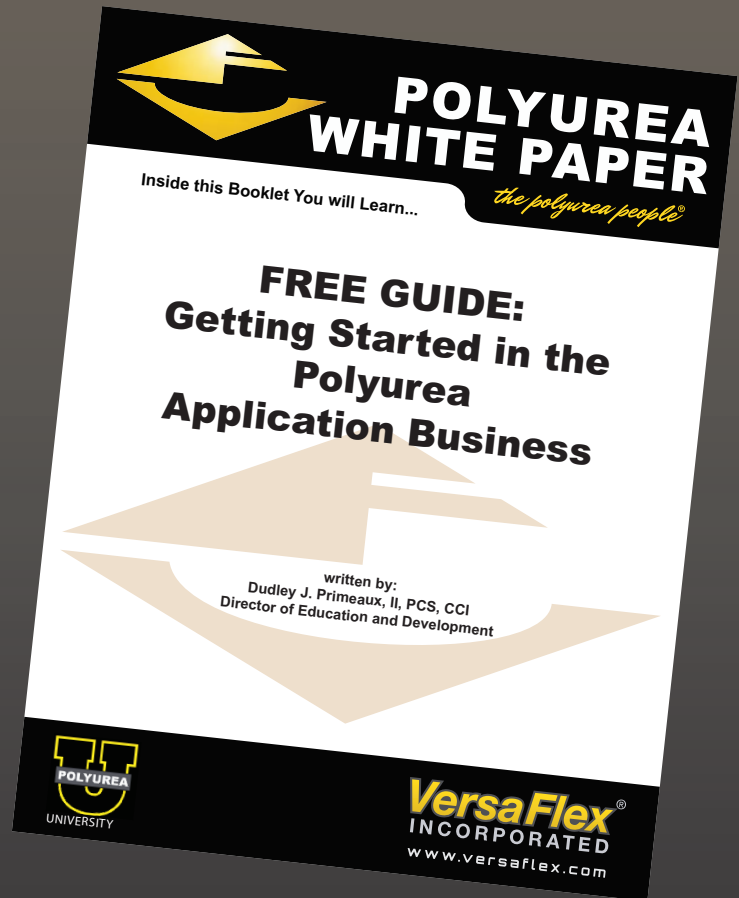
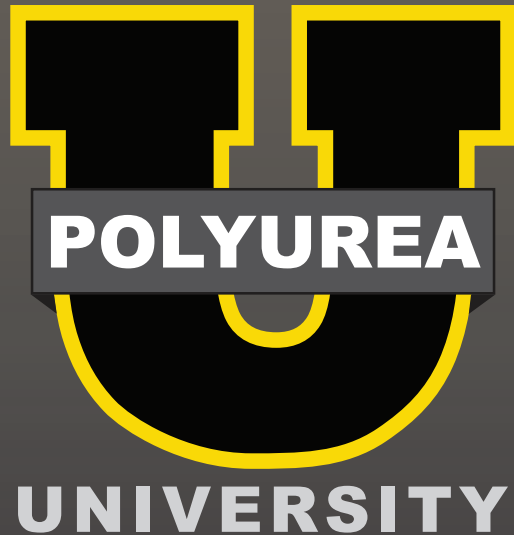


Dr. Cline has been with Fomo for more than three years, most recently serving as the company's Technical Department Manager. In her new role, Dr. Cline will continue to manage the technical and quality teams as well as look for areas of continuous improvement in Research and Development and Quality Control efforts for the organization.

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BY RYAN SPENCER

Fire protective coatings have undoubtedly aided the SPF industry's growth, as many of the jobs available today weren't practical before coatings—in many instances, you couldn't competitively bid them. However, there have been growing pains as the industry has grown and the use of coatings has expanded. Specifically, it has been somewhat of a challenge to generate industry-wide compliance with building codes pertaining to fire protective

coatings over SPF. Even today, a thorough understanding of said code requirements is to some degree a premium offering among applicators.

“Building owners and consumers look highly on an applicator who understands and guides them in the application of SPF, and relevant fire codes and protection,” said Gary Wolfe, Executive Vice President of International



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Fireproof Technology Inc. “Fire protective coatings are a code requirement that, if not met, will come back to be a nightmare in the future.”

Generally speaking, nightmare scenarios can be overblown as they’re told and retold, but when it comes to fire protective coatings, particularly those applied over SPF, the consequences of failing to comply with building codes are real, and can be absolutely devastating. Wolfe brought up a project he was recently contacted about that was completed about three years ago. After the 23,500 sq. ft. job—the location of which will remain unspecified—had passed final inspection from the local fire marshal, occupancy permits were issued. Some time later, a new fire marshal took over as the Authority Having Jurisdiction, or AHJ.

“He went into the building to do a yearly inspection of the fire extinguishers, exit signs, etc.,” Wolfe explained. “During the inspection, he couldn’t help but notice the SPF applied to the interior ceiling and walls—it was all coated.”

The fire marshal asked the building owner about the specific foam and coating used, and whether the assembly was a thermal barrier, per code. The owner contacted the applicator, who did not have proper records, but of course knew what SPF was applied. After a little digging, the applicator supplied a letter from the coating company merely stating the coating complied with alternative thermal barrier codes. The fire marshal, being very interested at this point, researched the company and discovered the coating had passed a few tests,



When it comes to fire protective coatings, particularly those applied over SPF, the consequences of failing to comply with building codes are real, and can be absolutely devastating.



but not on the particular SPF that was installed. He gave the building owner two weeks to remove and reinstall, or else he would red-tag the structure. The building owner is now pursuing legal action against the applicator for the cost of remediation, which will exceed \$3.50 per square foot (well over \$80,000). To make matters worse for the applicator, the fire marshal later requested his work record to check other SPF jobs he’d completed in the local market.

While that situation was especially disastrous, it’s by no means an isolated incident. As municipalities across the country experience turnover within their building code departments, newer, well-educated code officials are in some cases shaking things up. As Wolfe recalled, in another jurisdiction that will also remain unspecified, the “new sheriff in town” started making waves after he assumed the role from a predecessor that was lax on code compliance enforcement.

“Not only does he now check for compliance, he requested that all permits over the previous year that used SPF in his jurisdiction be pulled and re-checked,” Wolfe explained.

All non-complying applications will be faced with removal and reinstallation, which is neither a cheap nor an easy process. For instance, Wolfe explained that whenever a remediation issue is brought to his attention, IFTI requirements entail removing at least one inch of the existing foam, reapplying a new one-inch lift, and coating the new foam with a code-compliant thickness of DC315, which is IFTI’s industry-leading fire protective coating for SPF.

Now, these anecdotes shouldn’t be considered cautionary tales that reveal the inconvenience of fire protective coatings, but rather wake-up calls that illustrate the importance of code compliance. While it’s true that building codes can be convoluted, they’re entirely necessary from a safety perspective, and education is critical for applicators to be familiar with relevant codes.

“Not many people want to intentionally do something wrong,” Wolfe said. “As an SPF applicator, it’s important to know that whether you understand or not, you will be held responsible for non-compliance for many years to come.”

SPF manufacturers, coating companies, and organizations like the Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance (SPFA) and the Spray Foam Coalition (SFC) are working hard to educate the AHJ’s, SPF applicators, and architects on code compliance regarding thermal and ignition barriers over SPF. According to Wolfe, IFTI alone will sponsor over 40 events in 2015 related to education on the use of thermal and ignition barriers over SPF, which can only benefit the industry as a whole.

“Sure, the cheap bid wins some jobs, but in most cases the SPF applicator who is the most educated tends to get the job,” explained Wolfe. “We work with thousands of applicators, consultants, code officials, and architects every year, and without question this is the trend we see.”

In fact, the trend is so strong that IFTI is formalizing its education initiatives by launching in March 2015 the IFTI Certified Applicator Program, which will be open to everyone in the industry.

“We are currently working with a group of fire marshals, contractors, and applicators on the certification curriculum, which will cover everything an educated applicator should know,” said Wolfe. “Education is a huge profit center—more jobs and fewer issues equals more money!”

As this Editorial Spotlight Series on Code Compliance continues throughout 2015, Spray Foam Magazine will delve into the finer details of coatings education and the certification process. ■



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IMPROVING THE BUSINESS OF YOUR SPF BUSINESS

//////////////////////////////////// BY RYAN SPENCER //////////////////////////////////////

So you're landing jobs on a regular basis and revenue is flowing in, but what about profit? Is it where you'd like it to be? Sure, it's sensible to improve operational aspects of your business, but what about improving the business of your business? It can be difficult to take a step back in the midst of the day-to-day grind, but doing so is key to maximizing profit. In that regard, what happens before and after the job is just as important as the job itself. Taking time to improve can have a beneficial impact on your bottom line, and below we'll outline some fundamental considerations.

BIDDING

The basis of a successful and profitable bid begins with accurate measurements. Contractors who can't utilize electronic or paper blueprints offered by new construction applications must generate accurate measurements themselves, and laser measuring devices can come in handy. Common measurement oversights include ambiguities related to the building envelope, and the exclusion of non-insulated areas like windows, doors, and studs. The latter might seem like a no-brainer, but can be easily overlooked, and the insulation

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materials saved versus the labor and protective materials are usually comparable.

Additionally, estimators must be aware that the plans may change, and be prepared to communicate any changes with the installation crew. Applicators must be fully aware of the scope of work that is agreed upon—nothing more, nothing less. Changes to the scope of work sometimes occur and must be identified and documented prior to installation—if it isn't in writing, it didn't happen.

Cost of goods for spray foam applications can soar to be 70% of the total cost, so foam yield is directly and appreciably tied to profitability. To accurately project foam yields, contractors must consider factors like ambient temperature, substrate type, overspray, waste, and scheduling. Further complicating the issue is the difference between the chemical estimate and the actual chemical used, a disparity created by estimating worst case scenarios and then maximizing yield through preparation and planning. Chemical companies often provide yield estimates of their products but they're often based on ideal conditions. Contractors must measure their chemical performance with their equipment and personnel, and any changes in conditions require changes to the machine settings to provide maximum yield.

When it comes to accounting for labor, regulations and market forces may largely determine pay schemes. However, the high cost of materials puts a premium on worker efficiency, and that can be influenced by incentives from the management team. Goals can include: measuring and meeting job time estimates; comparing chemical usage and product yields; and gauging customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction can be measured via the amount of callbacks or having salesmen provide feedback they receive from their contacts. Of course, there is a



Cost of goods for spray foam applications can soar to be 70% of the total cost, so foam yield is directly and appreciably tied to profitability.

symbiotic relationship between the installers and the management and sales team, and everyone must excel at their crafts in order to make the team successful.

Additional costs like travel time and fuel are significant but are largely dependent on project specifics. Costs like maintenance and downtime, on the other hand are highly variable and can be difficult to estimate. Start up costs can also be problematic and negatively impact profitability if sporadic obstacles, such as the job site not being ready, are experienced. It's the responsibility of the management team to ensure a smooth start up process on every job.

Margins can be tricky. Sure, it's easy to add up all your costs and then tack on your margin. However, when operational efficiencies are attained, that practice can leave money on the table, as we'll see below.

ANALYSIS

After the job, a thorough analysis is crucial to the viability and profitability of a spray foam business. Since cost of goods can be so high, yield calculations and yield maximization

should be considered critical components of business management, not just field parameters. The process begins with determining actual yields, and often times contractors will leave the yield calculation to the end of month, but if management does not evaluate each project daily, margins will decrease immediately.

Stroke count is often used to pin down chemical consumption, but it's more of a rough rule of thumb when it comes to determining the amount of foam installed. There's really no substitute for actual physical measurements of the installed foam to accurately determine average thickness and total board feet. In order to maximize yields, the product and installation must be similarly exceptional. Selecting the right supplier and product, as well as the utilization and implementation of the supplier's processes and procedures, will increase yield and margins.

In following a supplier's recommended processes, assuming they constitute accepted best practices, the performance in the field must be assessed and continually improved. While

Proper selection of the best supplier and product, as well as the utilization and implementation of the supplier's processes and procedures, will increase yield and margins.

both the management team and the crew are equally vested in safe and successful applications, most of the

responsibility falls on the installers, as they are the ones doing the work.

It's in everyone's best interest that the management team gauges the efficiency, effectiveness, and safety practices of the foreman and the sprayers on a daily basis if possible.

An effectively managed workforce will necessarily translate to operational efficiencies. This is the goal of every operation, but the efficiencies themselves must also be managed. For instance, assume a company has been able to manage a more effective crew and also reduce costs. Is it going to benefit the company to take these savings, simply add its standard margin, and hit a lower price point? In that case, the company took its gains and gave it all to the marketplace. Gains in efficiency should be viewed as proprietary practices: developed processes, procedures, and product knowledge that are the exclusive property of the contractor. Efficiencies should always be retained, reinvested, and utilized for future growth.

And that's really the goal of any business—future growth. While everyone may strive for that goal while working *in* their business, it's those who are taking the time and making the effort to work *on* their business who will see it come to fruition. You really have to sit down and look at the numbers and make business decisions based on what numbers come up. That's when you're really managing your business.

As this Editorial Spotlight Series on Improving the Business of Your Business continues in 2015, Spray Foam Magazine will dig deeper into the bidding process and thorough analysis.

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FINDING A SOLUTION BY RYAN SPENCER FOR DIVERSE APPLICATIONS

Every business begins with a vision, and in the spray foam industry, that often materializes as a contractor plans to focus on certain types of applications—commercial insulation, for example. Moreover, a focus

on one kind of application or another will largely dictate how a contractor's spray rig is equipped. Sure, a purpose-built unit offers a greater degree of performance, but does it sacrifice a degree of versatility? In other words, do gains

in functionality for a specific type of application translate to losses in functionality for others? Or can contractors attain the best of both worlds—performance and flexibility—in one package?

(cont'd on the next page)

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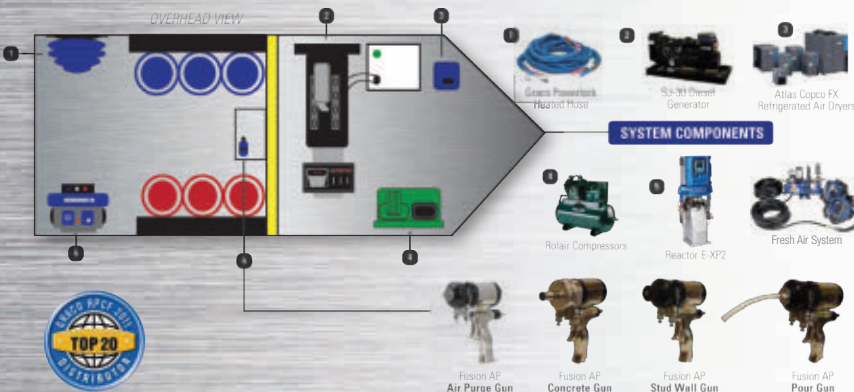
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FLORIDA FOAM ROOFING

On the west coast of Florida, Peter Venhousen first gained experience with spray foam when his company, Superior Roofing, first delved into the spray foam industry with attic insulation applications. In the years since, Superior has transitioned from residential insulation to commercial roofing.

“We’re just getting into the roofing side,” said Venhousen. “We’ve designed a system where we can attach solar panels to tar and gravel with spray foam.”

To make the transition, Superior needed a high-performance spray rig that would have no problem tackling substantial commercial foam roofing projects. What Venhousen opted for, an SFS ProPAK rig, delivered on the functionality he needed.

“In the past we’ve put our own rigs together, but the way it’s set up, it’s so user-friendly that we won’t go any other way in the future,” said Venhousen. “By the time you figure out the cost of buying everything separately and put a value on your time, it doesn’t make sense.”

Most recently, Superior utilized its ProPAK rig to install a 56,000 sq. ft. SPF roof with a 180kW solar array.

SO-CAL WATERPROOFING

Farther west in Southern California, Angelus Waterproofing & Restoration was also in need of a high-performance spray rig, but for primarily installing spray polyurea applications. Angelus CEO Shaun Geiger also turned to SFS, and the answer was the same: ProPAK.

“Making the investment in an expensive piece of equipment is something that requires a lot of research,” Geiger explained. “SFS was by far the most helpful in answering my questions, and figuring out what I needed.”



From spray polyurea waterproofing (top) to SPF lifting and leveling (bottom), SFS ProPAK rigs (right) can perform a variety of applications to address numerous market needs.

Angelus has utilized its ProPAK rig on several sizeable polyurea projects, including the Westfield Topanga Shopping Center and a Kaiser Permanente facility, both in Greater Los Angeles.

CAROLINA RETROFIT AND LIFTING

Back east in South Carolina, William Cantey was facing a slightly different situation than either Geiger or Venhousen when he sought a rig for his company, William Cantey’s Dr. Energy Saver. Cantey wanted a box truck rig, and to further complicate the build, the rig needed to be equally functional at performing both residential retrofit insulation applications and concrete lifting applications.

“We had a great experience, they really went out of their way,” Cantey said about SFS, which once again delivered the do-it-all solution—ProPAK—and for Cantey, the rig has already paid dividends.

“We definitely doubled our market share from where we were before the rig, just in the volume we can do and the price point we can be at,” he said.





A SINGLE SOLUTION

So it's evident that despite the differences between markets and within markets, one spray rig can address multiple needs while performing equally well in a wide variety of applications. With ProPAK, these contractors have found a comprehensive answer in a single package.

“The package was complete... there wasn't anything I had to add to it...very turnkey,” Venhousen summarized.

And when that key is turned, so to speak, there's nothing left for a contractor to do besides rolling up their sleeves, pulling the trigger, and getting the job done. ▶

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Thriving In Your First Year

BY RYAN SPENCER

Even with a foundation of comprehensive training and thorough planning, your first year in business can be a roller coaster. As any industry veteran will tell you, it can be difficult to assess the situation amidst the chaos.

“The entire year needs to be looked at from a perspective away from the day-to-day grind,” said Matt Enfield of Montana Spray Foam Inc., an Icnene dealer. “Simply put, when looking back at your first year in business, if you ‘kicked butt’ more often than you had your ‘butt kicked,’ then you had a successful first year.”

So much of what contributes to a successful spray foam business not only entails the gun-end of the job, but also what happens beyond the application. Indeed, thriving early on is really a consequence of making and seizing opportunities, properly installing a great product, and avoiding common pitfalls.

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CREATING OPPORTUNITY

As is so often illustrated in Google Maps, there are numerous routes from point A to point B. The same concept applies to your marketing plan: you may have outlined your company's services and the customers you want to target in your area, but there may be a number of ways to reach them. The thing is, some methods are better than others, and the right marketing decisions can accelerate growth.

"Referrals and website leads are examples of where we see opportunity to generate more low-cost leads in the future...If leads come organically from multiple lead sources, I count that as a success."

Leads are the lifeblood of any spray foam operation, and there's more than one way to get them. One important means by which to generate new business is by working with a partner. For instance, Icynene dealers like Enfield can leverage the company's Business Building Program, which uses co-op dollars to implement targeted marketing tactics like search engine optimization to drive dealers' business growth. Dealer-oriented marketing programs such as Icynene's offer valuable support for burgeoning businesses by providing contractors with a dedicated team that can assist in developing and executing a marketing plan.

EXCELLENCE IN EXECUTION

A focused marketing initiative is certainly a blueprint for success, but properly installed applications are what turn the blueprint into revenue. In other words, any plan for future success will prove unsustainable if applications aren't done properly. Not only will mistakes and callbacks cost a company money in the short term, but they'll also cost a company its reputation in the long term.

Of course, training lays the necessary foundation with which to properly install SPF, but that doesn't mean a few training sessions will bestow a contractor with absolute expertise. On the contrary, installing foam insulation with a thorough degree of proficiency, like any other skill, is earned through experience and maintaining a perspective beyond simply pulling the trigger.

In balancing the necessity to hone one's skills over time with that of installing the right application every time, it's prudent to seek technical and building science advice from a trusted partner when needed. In Enfield's case, Icynene provides dedicated technical and building science teams that are on call to work one-on-one with him to troubleshoot problems, assess unique applications, and demystify building code restrictions. Supporting best installation practices is really the only way to ensure proper execution from the beginning.

SUPERIOR QUALITY

The quality of your work is a direct result of your execution, but what about the quality of product being installed? Do you want to install products that meet industry standards, or products that push the boundaries of what's considered to be sufficient? Working to advance the status quo not only results in better products, but also results in a reputation surrounding the products that can benefit the selling process.

Leads are the lifeblood of any spray foam operation, and there's more than one way to get them.



“Clients know the Icynene brand and what it represents, so the questions about performance, quality, and function are reduced,” said Ivan Pauliuchenka, owner of Cape Cod Spray Foam, an Icynene dealer. “This is noticeable compared to other brands on the market.”

If the product speaks for itself, then that’s one less thing left to chance when it comes to sealing the deal for a given job. But it’s not only the product that’s doing the speaking, as feedback from contractors like Enfield and Pauliuchenka is critical to Icynene gauging its products’ performance. The company conducts on-site visits with contractors to seek out what’s working, what challenges exist, and how product innovations can address those challenges.

PERFECTING PRICING

Before work even begins, there’s ample opportunity to sink a company, or to allow it to thrive; the results hinge on the bidding process. Just as an application must be installed properly, a job must be quoted correctly. Bid too high and risk choking sales, bid too low and risk losing profit. It’s really about finding the sweet spot, and tools like job bidding software can support businesses in generating accurate quotes. Luckily, Enfield and Pauliuchenka have access to job bidding software vendors who’ve partnered with Icynene to foster quote accuracy among the company’s dealers.

As a business grows, it becomes increasingly imperative for the bidding process to be consistent, especially as the responsibility is transferred from the owner to salespeople. Furthermore, receivables are always a looming issue. To address these potential pitfalls, scope-of-work templates can ease communication between salespeople and building owners, and tools like PayPal and Square can provide customers with more payment options.

So, as your first year unfolds, keep in mind that it’s just as important to work on your business as it is to work in it. 🎧



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PROPERLY SELECTING SPRAY FOAM EQUIPMENT

BY JUAN SAGARBARRIA

Assembling the best possible spray rig constitutes an involved buying process. Even though rigs are available in pre-equipped, turnkey packages, SPF contractors can go one step further when deciding how to outfit their rigs by customizing the rig with specific components that matches their needs. To achieve this, the SPF distributor meticulously walks the contractor through the equipment selection process. Through this collaboration, the SPF contractor is able to select SPF equipment based on their precise needs, rather than adhering to standardized packages.

Addressing those needs involves three main considerations: industry sector (residential/commercial), application type (roofing/insulation), and time spent on the job (part-time/full-time). Those considerations will dictate a properly equipped spray rig. To get a clearer picture of the spray rig outfitting process, Spray Foam Magazine spoke to Jeremy Slosek of Christian Fabrication, a spray foam equipment distributor.

Spray Foam Magazine: *What considerations are involved when choosing the right proportioner for SPF roofing and insulation applications?*

Jeremy Slosek: *If the contractor works part-time on residential projects that entail medium-output applications, I'd*

recommend going with a smaller, yet effective electric machine that provides more bang for the contractor's buck like the Graco E-20. If the contractor works in a full-time capacity, whether it's for residential or commercial

Top: The length of hose needed for any given SPF project is determined by the sheer size of the application; **Right:** smaller electric proportioners are recommended for part-time SPF applicators



PHOTOS COURTESY of Christian Fabrication



“The type of application dictates the length of hose you’re going to need... Alternatively, you could use an all-in-one portable unit that takes a smaller machine up an elevator to do high-rise buildings.”

insulation, I’d recommend going with a higher-output designed for larger jobs like the Graco Reactor E-30 or Graco H-25, the latter being a hydraulic machine. When it comes to spray foam roofing, I’d recommend going with a larger, hydraulic machine like a Graco Reactor H-40 or H-50. With a high-performance hydraulic machine, you never run out of output and there’s little to no chance of maxing that machine out.

SFM: *What are the different variables when choosing the length of hose to work with on SPF projects?*

JS: The type of application dictates the length of hose you’re going to need. For commercial roofing applications, you’re obviously going to need more hose than insulation applications. For residential insulation projects, 210 feet of hose should be plenty to work with. For commercial roofing projects, I’d recommend going with the maximum amount of hose possible. 410 feet of hose should suffice, but once again, it all depends on the size of the roof. Alternatively, you could use an all-in-one portable unit that takes a smaller machine up an elevator to do high-rise buildings, in which case you’d be good to go with 60 feet of hose.

SFM: *As far as spray guns go, what options do contractors have?*

JS: There are many different options, but I always recommend three: the Graco Fusion Air-Purge (AP), the Graco Clearshot, and the Probler 2. The

Fusion gun is the most commonly used gun in the SPF market and I feel it’s the easiest to work with, even though it needs constant maintenance.

Many contractors prefer the Fusion Clearshot because it is built with a liquid technology that cleans the mix chamber as it is being used, thus providing less downtime. The tradeoff comes when it’s time to maintain the Clearshot, as it has twice as many parts as the Fusion AP, thereby making it more complicated to clean. The Probler P2 is a gun that we see selected from contractors that have been spraying for years and like the way it handles, albeit it is definitely

not as user-friendly and technologically advanced as the Fusion AP or the Clearshot.

SFM: *What factors play into the choice of transfer pumps?*

JS: The size of your proportioner also determines the size of your transfer pump. Technically, you could go with a larger pump on a small proportioner, but that would be overkill. I would recommend 2:1 transfer pumps like Graco’s T-1 and T-2 or IPM’s IPO2 and OP232C.

SFM: *What considerations are involved when sizing a generator?*

JS: A smaller machine like an E-20 would typically only need an 18 kW generator, whereas a large machine like an E-30 would require a 30 kW or a 40 kW generator. If the contractor is



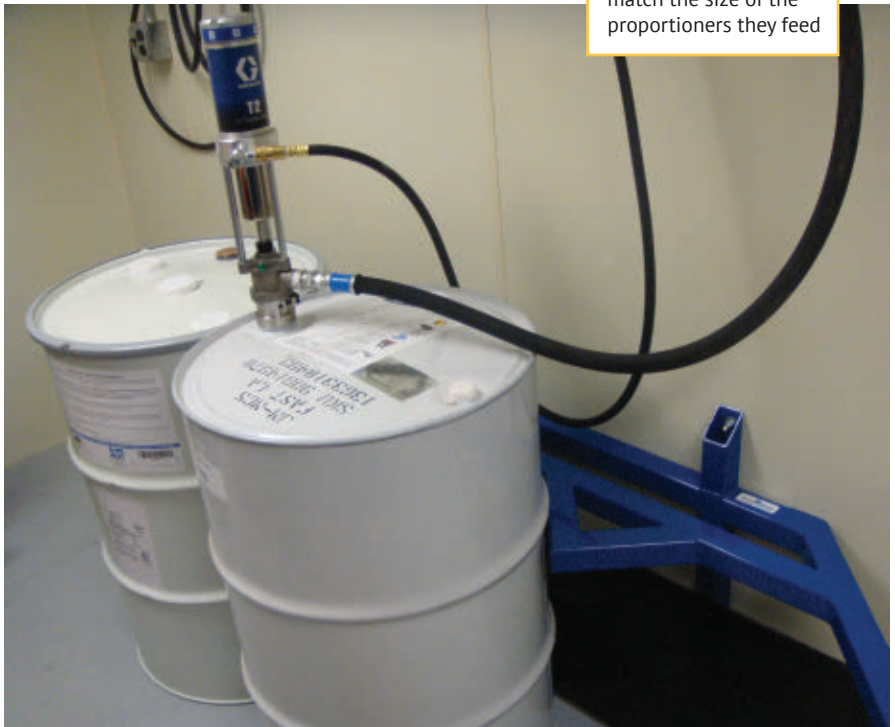
operating with a larger machine, I'd definitely recommend the Morse 40 kW generator because it comes with a built-in 40 CFM screw air compressor, which provides the power supply and air you need to run your proportioner, while saving space in your rig since a separate air compressor won't be needed.

SFM: *But what about when you do need the separate air compressor?*

JS: When considering what size of compressor to get, it is important to know what is going to be air-powered. For example: if the crewmembers are using a fresh-air system while air-powering their spray gun and fluid-transfer pump, then they're going to need an air compressor that provides the CFM required to power all three things simultaneously. Other options include a drum mixer for open-cell applications and an air-powered foam planer. The only time a proportioner would play a role in choosing an air compressor would be if the contractor went with an air-driven machine that would require 28 CFM by itself. I'd recommend going with Rolair compressors.

SFM: *How does an air dryer fit into the system?*

JS: Air dryers have different CFM's that can pass through them. Different types of air dryers can range from 20 – 50 CFM. In order for your



equipment to run smoothly, the CFM from the air dryer must match the CFM of the air compressor.

SFM: *What are your recommendations for drum placement within a rig?*

JS: It all depends on their preference of layout. Normally, I'd recommend putting the drums towards the back of the rig because it's easier to load them up and take them out there. If the crewmembers are busy, there's going to be drums being loaded everyday, if that's where they are situated. You don't want to have to go past the proportioner to load and unload drums because the proportioner can possibly get damaged that way. The proportioner should be kept in the front so it stays out of harm's way. The drums should definitely have either an E-track restraint system or barrel holders with straps keeping them in place when the trailer is in motion. ▶◀



Left: the size of the generator should match the size of the proportioner; **Right:** compressors should provide sufficient CFM to power spray guns, fluid-transfer pumps, and a fresh-air system

■ CONTACT CHRISTIAN FABRICATION

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SPRAY FOAM SAVES THE OFFICE SPACE
OF A COCA-COLA DISTRIBUTION FACILITY

BY JUAN SAGARBARRIA



The Coca-Cola Company operates numerous facilities across the world that thrive through timely production, where an interruption can result in downtime that alters production and distribution schedules. To keep this proverbial well-oiled machine running, any facility-related issues must be remediated with haste.

After a pipe froze and burst above the ceiling of an office space inside a 70,000 sq. ft. Kentucky-based Coca-Cola distribution facility, management sought a quick and long-lasting solution. They learned that the freezing of the pipe was a direct result of ineffective batt insulation that had deteriorated over time,

allowing cold air to infiltrate the space above the drop ceiling. Furthermore, outside air was entering into the building through the vented soffits, which gave way to condensation.

Management opted to act quickly and have the pipe fixed and the insulation replaced. Upon fixing the frozen pipe, it was discovered that the condensation had generated mold in the batt insulation and the drywall. Even though the mold was not around any of the consumable products, management had a mold remediation crew come on site and remove the ceiling and batt insulation immediately. Management decided to utilize spray foam insulation to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

(cont'd on the next page)

Exterior view of the Coca-Cola distribution facility in Kentucky



Management contracted Purefoam Insulation for the project, which entailed installing a three-inch lift of foam to the roofdeck of the 4,500 sq. ft. office space.

“The busted pipe was clearly a result of subpar insulation being installed to the roof sheathing,” said Purefoam’s Manuel Adler. “Spray foam was the perfect solution for leak prevention, not to mention immense energy savings.”

A three-man Purefoam crew came on site and prepared the spray area with safety and time-saving in mind. The Purefoam crew noticed that the room itself had a circular shape with a 22-foot peak that would require scaffolding for crewmembers to properly carry out the application. They decided that they would install a protective coating as opposed to drywall after the SPF application in order

“SPRAY FOAM WAS THE PERFECT SOLUTION FOR LEAK PREVENTION, NOT TO MENTION IMMENSE ENERGY SAVINGS.”

to comply with local building code requirements and simultaneously save time. To mitigate SPF overspray damage, the crew covered the floor, windows, and sprinkler heads with plastic sheathing. The crew wore PPE consisting of Tyvek suits, boots, gloves, and supplied-air respirators.

With the scaffolding in place and 300 feet of hose connecting their spray rig to the spray area, the Purefoam crew was ready for the foam application. Using a Graco H-30 proportioner, the crew applied the foam to the underside of the roof using a Graco Fusion air-purge gun. The three inches of foam that were applied provided an R-21 value. Throughout the application, the crew used InsulStar, a 2 lb. closed-cell spray polyurethane foam product formulated by NCFI.

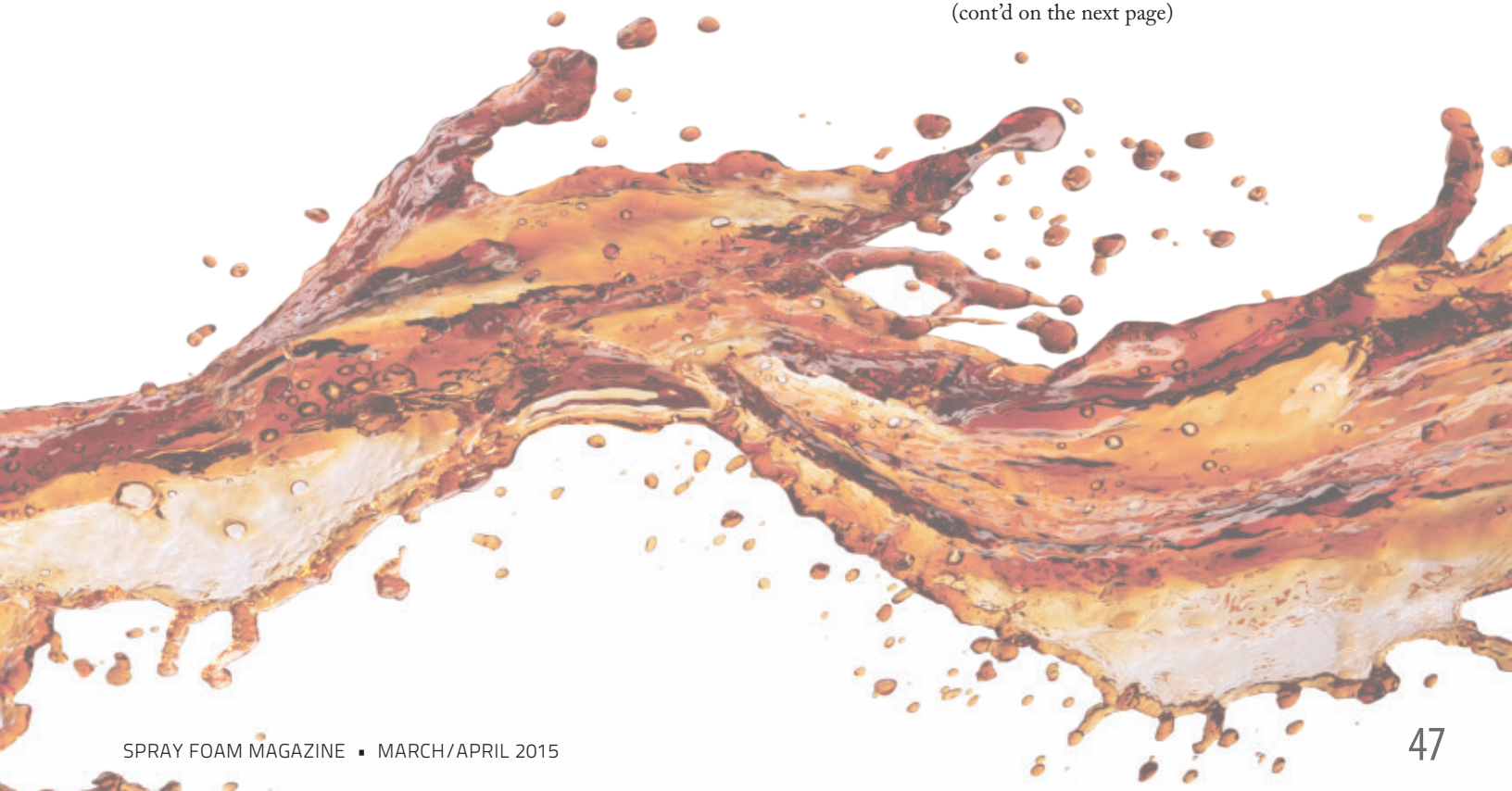
“Closed-cell spray foam was the obvious choice for this project,” said Adler. “Structural rigidity was necessary and the foam itself is non-porous, providing an air and vapor barrier, so that there’s no danger of history repeating itself.”



View of the circular office space room and the 22-foot peak of the underside of the roof

After the spray foam application, the crew utilized a Graco GH 833 hydraulic gas sprayer to apply to the underside of the roof 40 wet mils of DC-315, a thermal barrier protective coating formulated by IFTI.

(cont'd on the next page)





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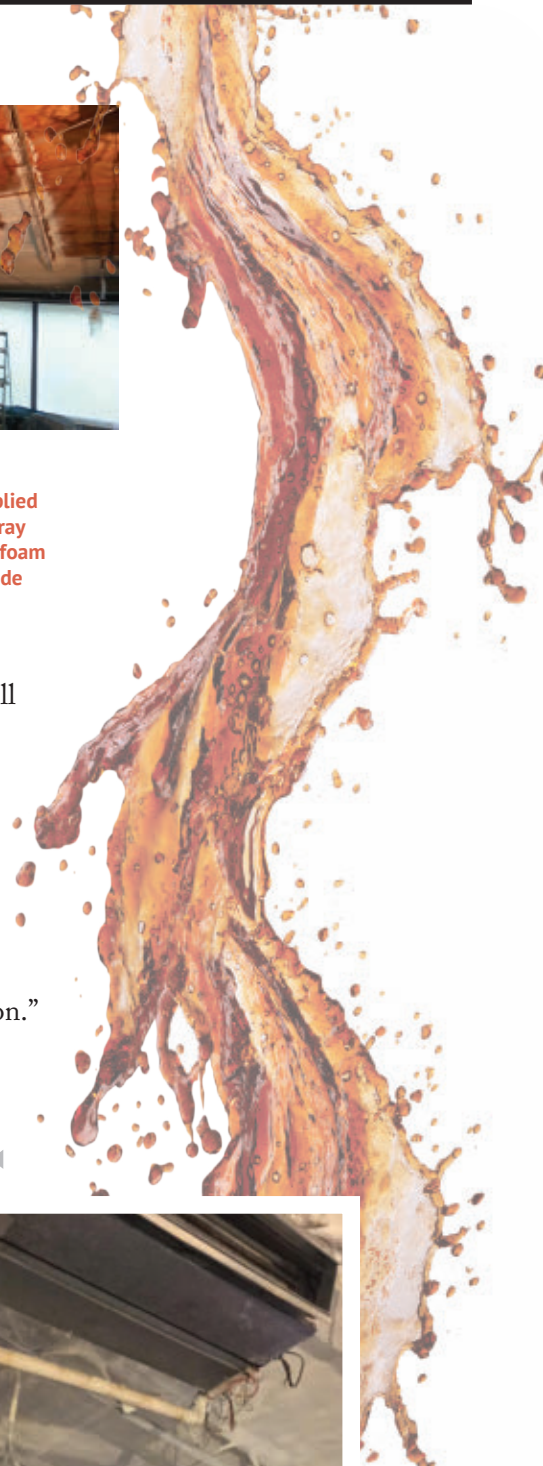
Purefoam Insulation applied closed-cell spray polyurethane foam to the underside of the roof

The Purefoam crew finished up with the application of the materials in three days. They spent three hours cleaning up the site before they packed up and headed home. After the project's completion, management called Adler and expressed their gratitude for a job well done. Management noted that the office space's environment changed drastically, and that they no longer needed to adjust the thermostat as much as they previously had to.

"The owners were very impressed with how the foam had sealed every

nook and cranny and how well insulated their building felt," said Adler. "The spray foam on that roof will now stop all air infiltration, which is something the old batt insulation could not do. Spray foam insulation will never need to be replaced; it is the forever type of insulation."

For more information, please visit www.purefoaminsulation.com.



Different sections of the roof after the spray polyurethane foam application

The Right Treatment

BY JUAN SAGARBARRIA



A four-step spray foam roof system eliminates leaking issues for Philadelphia Water Department building

The Philadelphia Water Department's (PWD) function goes way beyond providing water to the homes and businesses of the city made famous by Rocky Balboa and cheesesteak sandwiches. Before the water can be distributed, the PWD tests it for quality so that the end-user receives the highest-grade potable drinking water possible. In fact, a recent report produced by PWD's product quality exceeds the standards developed by the EPA to protect public health.

Skyline of downtown Philadelphia



This testing process is carried out inside PWD's central laboratory building that solely operates in this capacity. As unequivocally important as this testing process is, it is also of equal importance that the water being tested does not get contaminated with infiltrating water. The testing building's roof deteriorated with age. Even though PWD tried to repair the roof on previous occasions, it was never properly sealed and leaking remained constant in different areas of the building. At long last, PWD figured it was time for a quick solution

that warranted long-term performance. PWD then found their coveted restoration in the form of a spray polyurethane foam roof system. PWD brought in spray foam specialists JJD Urethane, a company with which PWD had a long-standing relationship.

The first step in the restoration project involved the removal of the original roof system, which consisted of an EPDM substrate with river rock ballast aggregate and two-inch ISO board over

PHOTOS COURTESY of JJD Urethane



View of the PWD roof during the removal of the original EPDM system



steel decking. JJD brought in a twelve-man subcontracting crew for the removal of the roof system. A six-man SPF crew from JJD would later join the tear-off crew. The JJD crew was able to inspect the project area before and during the removal process. Upon inspecting the original system, the JJD crew noticed that the system was in utter disarray. Aside from the typical signs of wear-and-tear, the crew noticed that the ballast had been applied on too heavily and added excessive weight, which crushed the ISO boards underneath and caused them to loosen and fall apart.

“The roof system was completely unstable,” said JJD’s John DiNenna. “A combination of the weight of the ballast and people walking on the roof coupled with age had caused the EPDM to stretch and give way to cracks. A spray foam roof system was exactly the cure for this mess.”

After removing the original system, the tear-off crew installed SECUROCK Gypsum board to the steel decking, utilizing screws and fasteners to secure the board to the substrate.

When the tear-off crew would go off site, the JJD crew punched in, working on the areas

that were ready for foam installation. They parked their rig on the side of the building and pulled their hoses onto the roof. The crew used two machines for the spray foam application: a Graco H-20/35 for the detail work and a Gusmer H5 proportioner for the bulk of the field installation.

In certain areas of the building, there were parapet walls that were high enough to provide fall safety for the crewmembers. However, for most of the roof the crew used perimeter flagging. Additionally, the crew masked 1,400 lineal feet of cap flashing that circled the entire building to protect it from overspray damage.

For the spray foam application, the JJD crew installed to the ISO boards two inches of Bayseal, a 3 lb. spray polyurethane foam made by Bayer MaterialScience. The crew utilized 6-by-10-foot burlap windscreen to mitigate overspray damage while the foam was applied. The crew installed 18 sets of foam, which totaled a spray area of 24,000 square feet.

“The spray polyurethane foam was able to seal all the areas that had previously been leaking,” said DiNenna. “It will also provide insulation,

FOAM APPLICATION



During the foam application portion of the project, the JJD Urethane crew installed two inches of SPF



“ THE SPRAY POLYURETHANE FOAM WAS ABLE TO SEAL ALL THE AREAS THAT HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN LEAKING. IT WILL ALSO PROVIDE INSULATION, WHICH IS SOMETHING THAT THE BUILDING NEVER HAD BEFORE AND PWD WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT.”

– JOHN DINENNA, JJD URETHANE

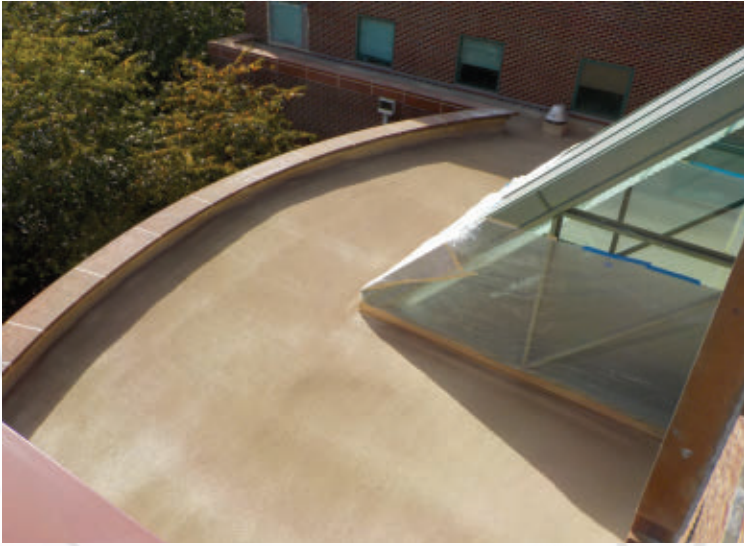


View of the roof after the grey silicone coating application

COATING APPLICATION



TOP COAT APPLICATION



A tan, silicone coating was utilized for the topcoat



which is something that the building never had before and PWD was very concerned about. The water testing staff will benefit from insulation in terms of comfort and energy efficiency.”

After the spray foam had cured, the JJD crew used a Graco Xtreme 45:1 airless spray pump to apply a 20-mil base coat of SCM3400, a medium-gray silicone coating made by General Electric (GE). Then, the crew used an additional Graco Xtreme 45:1 pump to apply a 15-mil topcoat of GE’s SCM3405, a tan-colored silicone coating.

The JJD crew then stocked their crane with a 700 lb. blast pot that attached a 250-foot, 1.5-inch supply hose that was used to broadcast 3-M Buff colored granules at the rate of 40 pounds per 100 square feet over the silicone topcoat. The crew then used a backpack blower to pile up and later dispose of all the loose granules that did not get embedded into the topcoat. DiNenna noted that it was vital to clear off the roof from any roof granules because loose granules tend to get into the drain system and can eventually block roof drainage.

For the final step of the project, the JJD crew was asked by PWD to install walkways, so that when it was time for the HVAC installation, the HVAC



"THE WALKWAYS PROVIDED THE ROOF WITH **ADDED SAFETY** SO THAT PEOPLE INSTALLING OR SERVICING MECHANICAL UNITS DIDN'T WALK AROUND AREAS THAT COULD POTENTIALLY DAMAGE THE ROOF SYSTEM."



The JJD crew installed walkways to mitigate damage to the roof system during future HVAC installations

subcontracting crew could perform their work without damaging the recently installed roof system. The walkway system consisted of installing 3.5 gallons per square of a light grey silicone coating made by GE to contrast from the tan topcoat and then hand broadcasted different color granules at 50 pounds per square onto the wet silicone. The JJD crew made the walkways 3 feet wide and installed a total of 750 feet of walkways throughout the roof.

"The walkways provided the roof with added safety so that people installing or servicing mechanical units didn't walk around areas that could potentially damage the roof system," said DiNenna. "The different colors of the coating and granules accentuated the walkways, making them clear for all to see. Even though this spray

foam roof system is going to last over 20 years no matter who is walking on it, the walkways added an extra degree of protection from wear-and tear to the SPF roof system."

DiNenna and his crew were on site for almost six weeks, at which point the project was completed. He said that PWD was very pleased with their work and valued the fact that the spray foam roof included a 20-year service warranty.

"This is a waterproof system that is guaranteed for 20 years with a renewable contract for another 20 years," said DiNenna. "What's not to like?"

For more information, please visit www.jjdurethane.com.

PINPOINT PERFECT PARADISE

OPEN-CELL AND CLOSED-CELL SPRAY FOAM INSULATION CREATES A MOISTURE BARRIER FOR ISLAND HOME

BY JUAN SAGARBARRIA



Floridians are steeped in the art of getting away... in their own backyard. With so many recreational options involving the ocean, the sun, and ultimate relaxation, they find a peaceful haven in myriads of locations scattered along the state's coast. Keeping these options in mind, a Florida resident wanted a private getaway constructed in an area far away from major urban areas – a home that he could arrive to only by boat. He found just that in Grant Farm Island, also known as VIP Island, an exclusive gem located in the Intracoastal Waterway, just off Sebastian Inlet.

However, there is a bit of a hurdle that comes with having a home right by the water: waterproofing. Understanding the moisture infiltration problems that could arise, the owner contacted Tailored Foam of Florida, an SPF contracting company. Tailored Foam's Robert Adams briefed the homeowner on a cost-effective spray foam installation that combined the use of open-cell and closed-cell spray polyurethane foam. The homeowner then gave the green light for the project.

“This home sat on two-foot columns and it was so close to the water that moisture was definitely going to get into it,” said Adams. “Spray foam was the best solution because it generates a moisture barrier, it keeps the water out there. SPF also provides the home with high R-value, which is so important throughout the seasons.”



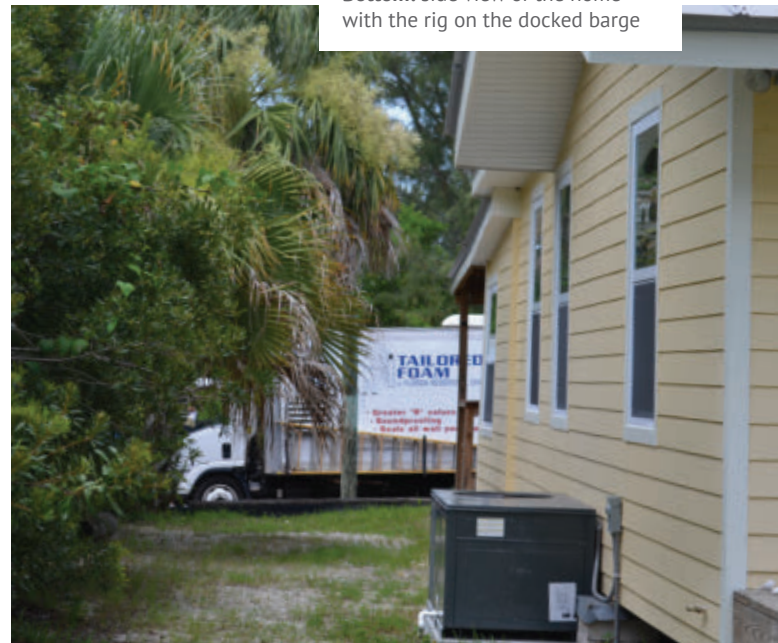
Top: the Tailored Foam crew utilized a barge to transport their box truck rig to Grant Farm Island;
Bottom: side view of the home with the rig on the docked barge

Adams brought in a member of Tailored Foam to perform the SPF application, which entailed installing spray foam to a 2,500 sq. ft. area consisting of the underside of the roof deck, the exterior walls, and the subfloor.

A unique accuracy-improving aspect of the installation process involved the use of specialized guides to improve foam depth consistency. The crew utilized Foamrite USA measuring pins to accurately gauge the foam depth on every substrate to which foam would be installed. Adams, who developed Foamrite measuring pins with his wife Suzanne, explained that the pins, which are made of foam and come in standardized sizes in half-inch increments, are simply stuck to whatever surfaces that need to be sprayed and indicate to the installer exactly how much foam should be applied to meet spec.

“The pins eliminate the guesswork from the application,” said Adams. “They offer a simple solution to expedite a spray foam application, and I don’t go out on any job without them.”

Adams noted that the only challenge the project presented came when getting their spray rig to the island. In order to accomplish that, the two-man Tailored Foam crew drove their box truck onto a rented barge that was docked outside of Melbourne and cruised 10 miles before they got to the jobsite. Once they got there, they tied up to the dock, where the rig and barge remained throughout the entire

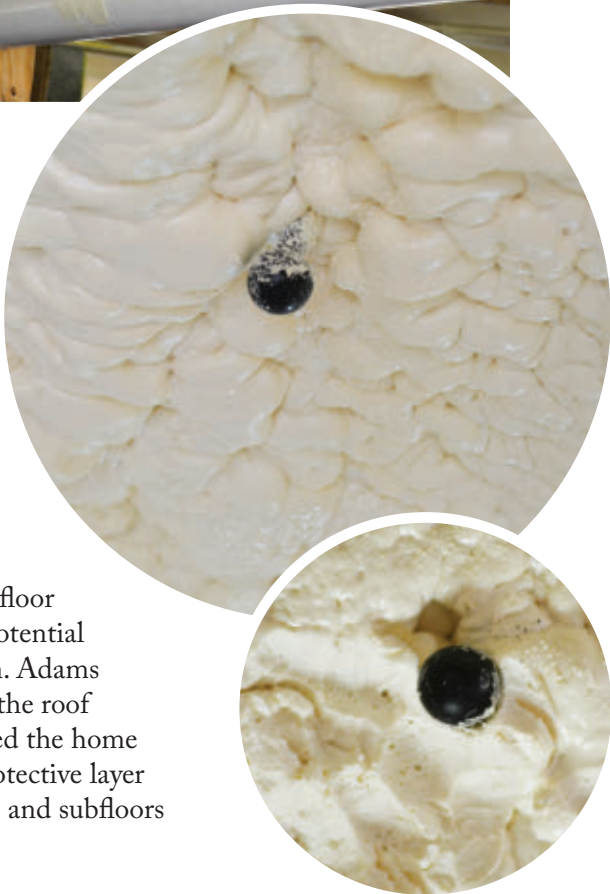


“THE PINS ELIMINATE THE GUESSWORK FROM THE APPLICATION. THEY OFFER A SIMPLE SOLUTION TO EXPEDITE A SPRAY FOAM APPLICATION, AND I DON’T GO OUT ON ANY JOB WITHOUT THEM.”

— ROBERT ADAMS, FOAMRITE USA



Left: a Tailored Foam crewmember applying SPF to the subfloor; **Right:** the spray foam created a moisture barrier for the home, which was nearby the water



project. With 300 feet of hose attached to their Graco Reactor H-40 proportioner, the crew was able to work with ease throughout every area of the jobsite.

“We had enough length of hose that we didn’t need to drive our truck off the barge at all,” said Adams. “We were equipped with the proper equipment to complete the job in a timely fashion and wanted to have the barge back onto its loading dock as soon as possible.”

The waterfront home was in the initial stages of its construction when Adams and his partner arrived on site, the frame of the home was built and a shingle roof was installed. Prior to the SPF application, the Tailored Foam crew covered the windows and doors with plastic sheeting to mitigate overspray damage. The crew was outfitted with Tyvek suits and used fresh air masks connected to a Tennessee Chill Box system during the application.

For the subfloor and exterior wall applications, they installed two inches of Bayseal, a 2 lb. closed-cell spray polyurethane foam made by Bayer. Then,

they applied 5.5 inches of Icynene’s Classic Max 0.5 lb. open-cell spray foam to the roofdeck. Adams noted that he recommended the use of closed-cell foam to the owner specifically for the exterior walls and subfloor because of the high potential for moisture intrusion. Adams also pointed out that the roof underlayment provided the home with an additional protective layer that the exterior walls and subfloors did not have.

“Closed-cell adds structural strength in addition to an air barrier,” said Adams. “In order to save the owner money, we wanted to install closed-cell SPF where it was most important, given the home’s location. We installed open-cell foam to the roof deck to seal the envelope and give the home R-value.”

Foamrite USA’s measuring pins eliminated the guesswork for foam depth during the application

During the SPF application, Foamrite's yellow and black pins were used. The yellow pins measured precisely 2 inches and the black pins measured 5.5 inches. Once the SPF expanded, covered the pin, and became flush with the circular end of the pin, the crew knew they had accomplished the foam depth beset by the project's specifications. Not only did the pins provide precise accuracy that shows the homeowner that he got exactly what he paid for, they also improved on the efficiency of the contracting company since the crew did not overspray and waste any material. Adams noted that the pins helped him and his partner complete the project in less than two days, which was ahead of schedule.

"When you get used to using the pins, you only have to know what color they are before sticking them on a substrate," said Adams. "The depth of foam is already measured for you as long as you are using the right color of pin."

A few months after the project was completed, the homeowner contacted Adams to let him know that



The crew installed open-cell spray foam to the underside of the roofdeck to increase the insulation R-value

the SPF application enabled him to keep his A/C at 71°F when it's both hot and cool out, and that he has had no moisture issues of any kind.

For more information, please visit www.tailoredfoaminc.com and www.foamriteusa.com.

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BREAKING DOWN SPRAYFOAM 2015

It may not have been the warmest convention to date, but Sprayfoam 2015 was the biggest, highest-profile show yet. Headlining the event was Ty Pennington, who infused a special kind of energy and enthusiasm into the occasion. Comprising the first two days of the convention, SPFA's Professional Certification Program closed in on a couple of milestones: 400 certifications issued and 100 field exams completed. Beyond that, nearly 80 exhibitors, over 1,000 attendees—including, for the first time, the general public—and a record number of breakout sessions cemented 2015's show as a landmark Sprayfoam Convention & Expo.





TY PENNINGTON TAKES OVER SPRAYFOAM 2015

Perhaps the biggest draw of Sprayfoam 2015 was the convention's first celebrity keynote speaker, Ty Pennington. He delivered an entertaining keynote address that discussed his career in construction and television, as well as his thorough appreciation for spray foam, and also took a number of questions

from the audience.

Pennington wasn't just a stage presence, though, as he highlighted an exclusive meet-and-greet event held for show sponsors, presented one of the Industry Excellence Awards, and hung out in Lapolla's booth at the Expo.

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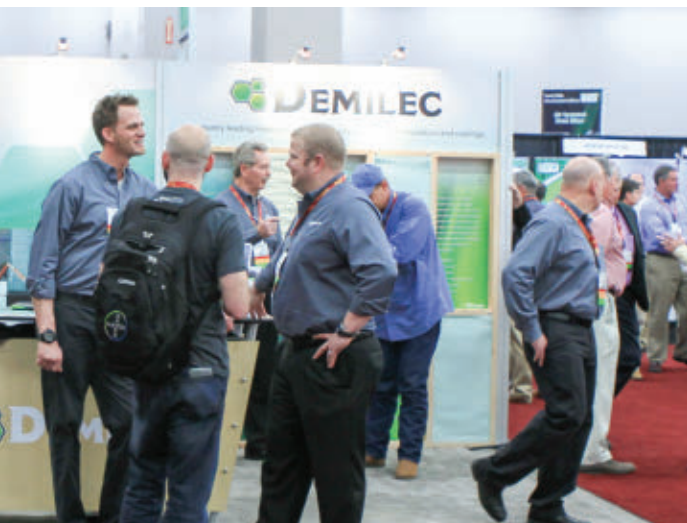


SPRAY FOAM & COATINGS

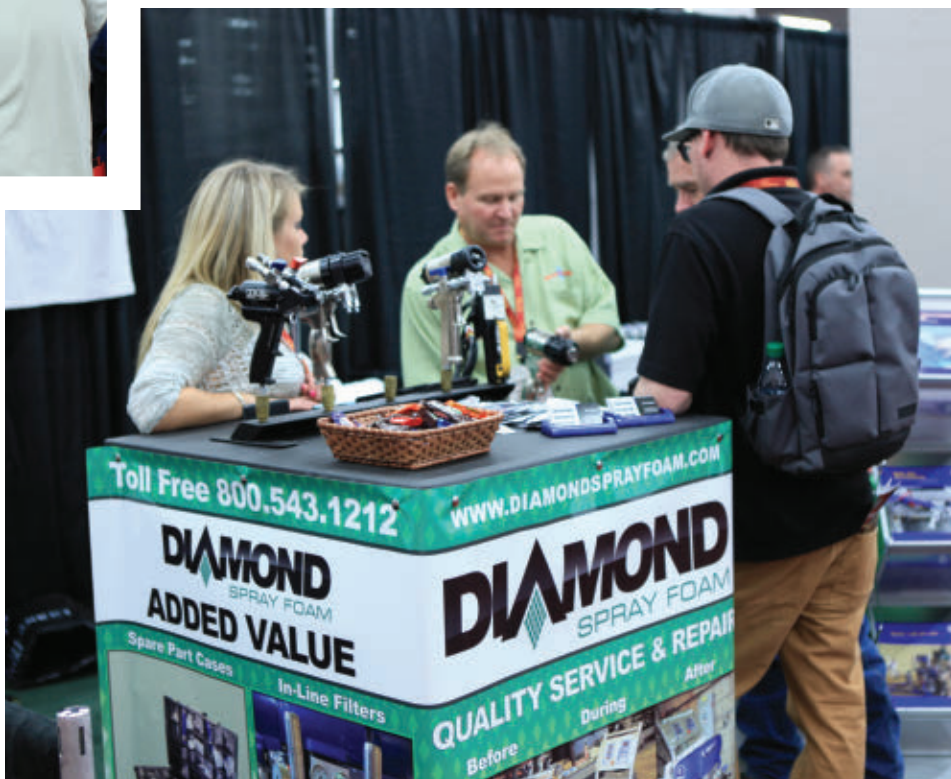
It wouldn't be a Sprayfoam show without SPF, right? All the major systems houses exhibited on the trade show floor. Attendees were able to scope out high-pressure open-cell and closed-cell foam systems, low-pressure foam kits, and hybrid insulation systems for insulation and roofing applications in residential and commercial sectors. Additionally, there was a major presence of the fire protective coatings, roof coatings, and solvents needed for every type of spray foam application.



(cont'd on the next page)







SPF RIGS & EQUIPMENT

Attendees that toured the trade show floor were treated to the latest and greatest equipment the spray foam industry has to offer. Electric and hydraulic proportioners, air-purge and solvent-purge spray guns, heated hoses, spare parts kits, air compressors, generators—if it's used in the industry, it was at the show. There were even a couple of fully equipped spray foam rigs on site.

(cont'd on the next page)



10TH ANNUAL CONTRACTOR INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS



An important highlight of Sprayfoam 2015 was the 10th anniversary of the Contractor Industry Excellence Awards Luncheon. The winners and runners up are listed below.

■ RESIDENTIAL WALL

WINNER: A New Millennium for Adobe House
RUNNER-UP: Arizona Foam & Spray for Meerkat Manor

■ COMMERCIAL WALL

WINNER: Foam Tech for Spooky Nook Sports
RUNNER-UP: Nunavut Excavating for Nunavut Multiplex

■ SPF ROOF UNDER 40,000 SQ.FT.

WINNER: Wedge Roofing Inc. for Life-Time Spray Foam Improvement on Historic Residence
RUNNER-UP: Arithane for Cedar House

■ SPF ROOF OVER 40,000 SQ.FT.

WINNER: RPC Industries Inc. for Great Hearts Academy
RUNNER-UP: Henderson-Johnson Co., Inc. for Northeast Carpenters Private Clubhouse

■ SPECIALTY APPLICATIONS

WINNER: Western Pacific Roofing Corporation for Hildebrand Dome Construction Monolithic Dome
RUNNER-UP: West Roofing Systems, Inc. for Charter School Gym Rehabilitation



AFTERHOURS

No Sprayfoam Convention & Expo would be complete without a healthy dose of extracurricular activities. From the receptions on the trade show floor, to post-Expo VIP events, to an all-out rocking bash hosted by SWD, Sprayfoam 2015 lived up to the event's reputation.



SPRAYFOAM.COM DEMOS THE NEW WEBSITE

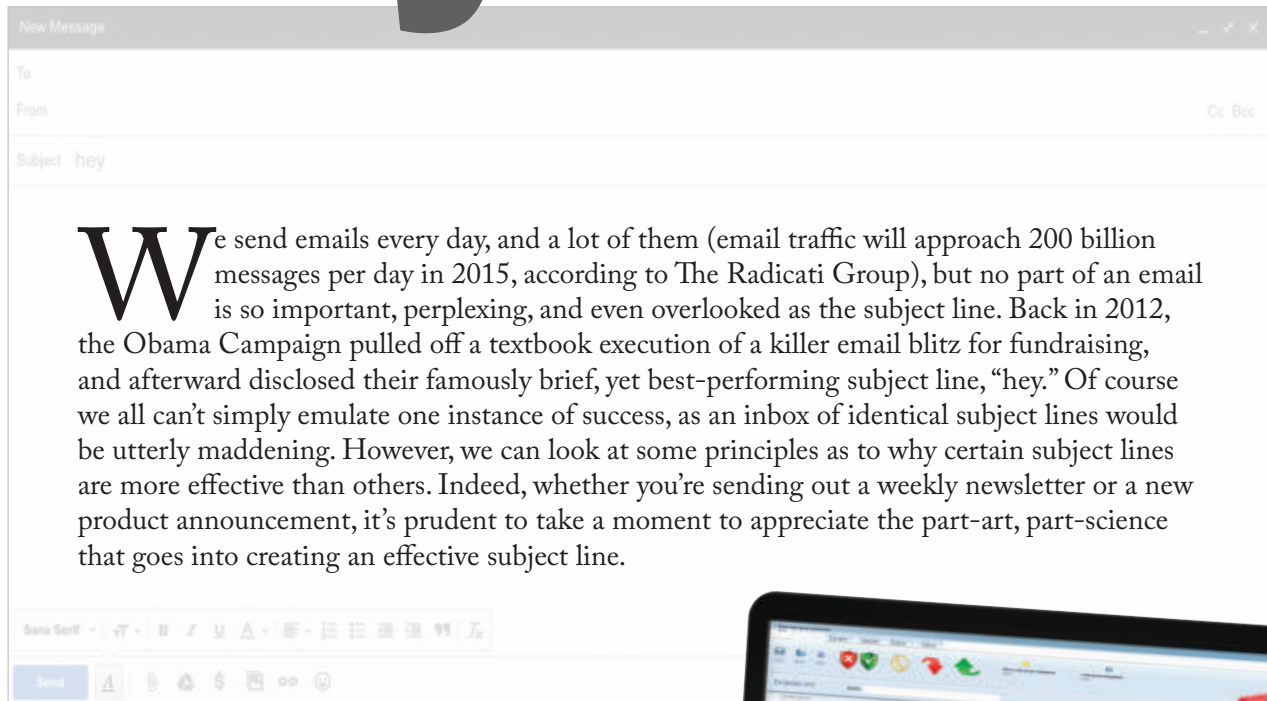
SprayFoam.com and Spray Foam Magazine both delivered major news during Sprayfoam 2015. SprayFoam.com debuted its all-new website that will launch in early 2015, while Spray Foam Magazine announced it will be printing every 2015 issue, beginning with the January/February issue handed out at the show. Attendees received their free print issues in their convention bags, and were able to demo the new website at SprayFoam.com's booth. ▶



hey

Are you getting the most from your subject lines?

BY RYAN SPENCER



DO IT, AND DO IT FIRST

The body of an email typically gets the most attention, and often to the detriment of the subject line. In fact, it’s not uncommon to leave it to the end of the email writing process (don’t worry, we’re all guilty of this). The subject line shouldn’t be an afterthought, as it’s the first thing a recipient sees, thereby setting the tone for the rest of the email. Furthermore, it can be more effective to write the subject line first to focus the message of the body content.



THE MAJORITY OF EMAILS ARE NOW OPENED ON MOBILE DEVICES



WRITE FOR MOBILE

Most people are aware subject lines should be (at least somewhat) brief—sentences need not apply. But how brief, exactly? Generally speaking, inboxes cut off at around the 60th character of a subject line, so the long-held rule of thumb has been to not exceed 50 characters, just to be safe. That rule of thumb might still be adequate for recipients checking emails on larger screens (desktops, laptops, netbooks), but inadequate for mobile checkers, who now comprise the majority.

While the estimates vary between just over half (53%, Litmus) to nearly two-thirds (65%, Movable Ink), there is ample evidence to confirm the majority of emails are now received and opened on mobile devices, and the trend will only continue in the foreseeable future. What can you do about it? Cut the “50 Rule” in half, as the cutoff for mobile inboxes is about 25-30 characters. Tailoring your subject lines for mobile inboxes will not only address a growing audience, but also encourage concise writing.



**NEARLY
200 BILLION
EMAILS PER
DAY WILL BE
SENT IN 2015**


DON'T GET WORDY

It's clear subject lines need to be shorter, so here's how to cut them down. First, eliminate unnecessary words (i.e. filler words that don't add clarity or words that can be communicated in the body of the email). Also, put the most compelling and the most important words at the beginning, though not at the expense of comprehension. This will not only act as a failsafe against character cut-offs, but also produce subject lines that get straight to the point. Lastly, subject lines are not de facto literacy expositions, so there's no need to exercise your vocabulary, as robust as it may be. Longer words eat into the character count, so opt for short, easy-to-digest words. This last word-curbng suggestion also plays into the next consideration: subtext.

(cont'd on the next page)

BETWEEN THE LINES

There are two sides to every subject line. Its most obvious function is revealing information about the email, but it also reveals information about the sender in nuanced ways. Take capitalization: a subject line in title caps (“This Product Is Revolutionizing The Industry”) screams formality; lowercase (“what’s going on?”) screams familiarity; all caps (“TRY THIS NOW”) simply screams. Informal subject lines, written in a friendly format, offer an understandable appeal for recipients, and they tend to outperform formal or scream-y subject lines whenever they’re compared. Also influencing a recipient’s perception of friendliness is word choice, as hinted above. Plain vocabulary, mild slang, and even mild cursing can establish a sense of familiarity—the latter, of course, when implemented judiciously.

When it comes to indicating the content of the email, there are a couple of routes to take. An overly informative subject line cuts like a double-edged sword: it may give some recipients reason to open, while giving other cause to ignore. On the other end of the spectrum, an ambiguous “hey”-style subject line may peak a recipient’s curiosity, but if used too often its effect may be diluted. A common technique is initiating a kind of call and response—a question or phrase that engages the recipient and compels them to open the email (e.g. “Is your closet this clean?”). This middle ground, if you will, adds some indication of what’s in the email with out giving away the whole thing. Whichever direction you go with your subject lines, it’s important to test different tactics and use the data to make informed decisions. 

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The FAST (Fluid Applied System Techniques) Academy

American WeatherStar Corporate Facility • Mobile, AL ▶▶ The FAST Academy program at American WeatherStar, will present you the opportunity to gain a solid understanding of our products and the systems they compose. The 2-day Academy will include both traditional lectures and hands-on product/system applications. | www.americanweatherstar.com

APRIL 7 - 9, 2015

2015 ABAA Conference & Trade Show

Sheraton Dallas Hotel • Dallas, TX ▶▶ During this conference, three day comprehensive learning tracks and workshops will be offered for design professionals, general contractors, air barrier contractors, consultants and testing labs. | www.airbarrier.org

JUNE 14 - 17, 2015

Western Roofing Expo 2015

Paris Las Vegas Hotel & Casino • Las Vegas, NV ▶▶ Known for bringing all of the elements of the roofing industry together, the Western Roofing Expo focuses on the western region of the United States and the specific needs that roofing and waterproofing contractors face in these areas. | www.wsrca.com

JULY 16 - 18, 2015

SEBC – Southeast Building Conference

Orange County Convention Center • Orlando, FL ▶▶ A great opportunity to reach over 3,500 builders, contractors and remodelors in the Southeastern United States. | www.sebcshow.com

JULY 16 - 18, 2015

2015 FRSA Convention

Hyatt Regency Orlando & Orange County Convention Center • Orlando, FL ▶▶ RSA's convention consists of three full days of education, networking, family fun, sports, and friends along with two days of FRSA's highly recognized trade show, the Florida Roofing & Sheet Metal Expo. The theme for 2015, "Building on a Strong Foundation," will focus on FRSA member services. | www.floridarroof.com

OCTOBER 5 - 7, 2015

2015 Polyurethanes Technical Conference

Orlando, FL ▶▶ The 2015 Conference provides polyurethane industry leaders and professionals with an opportunity to hear about the latest research, technical developments and business issues affecting the global polyurethane industry. polyurethane.americanchemistry.com

NOVEMBER 18 - 20, 2015

Greenbuild 2015 – Expo & Convention

Washington Convention Center • Washington, D.C. ▶▶ Greenbuild is the world's largest conference and expo dedicated to green building. The green building community gathers to share ideals and mutual passion at Greenbuild, sparking a contagious buzz throughout the week. | www.greenbuildexpo.com

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