

Heritage-Crystal Clean Partners with Fort Wayne Metals

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Longtime IMA member Fort Wayne Metals (FWM) never loses sight of the fact that the wire they draw will end up in medical devices used to save lives; and they stress that philosophy with each of their 500-plus employees and apply it to all aspects of their operation, especially when selecting their vendors.

Because they keep this in mind, they look for companies they can develop a partnership with and therefore use for a long time.

In 2003, Heritage-Crystal Clean (HCC) first contacted Fort Wayne Metals Facilities Manager Bruce Watson in effort to review their environmental services needs. One of the first things discussed was the partnership idea and whether or not HCC could deliver and keep this in mind as well. Both Tracy Blake and Bob Gadson of HCC's Fort Wayne branch service location promised that they could and would continually deliver on this goal of FWM.

One of the first issues discussed were the sink-on-a-drum style solvent parts cleaners being used by FWM.



Left to right: Tracy Blake and Bruce Watson, both with Heritage-Crystal Clean, meet with Fort Wayne Metals Facilities Manager Bob Gadson.

“After nearly eight years of working together, HCC continues to stand by its promise and dedication to FWM.”

Gadson and Blake explained that HCC was a rapidly expanding parts cleaning and industrial waste disposal services company that had come up with an extremely innovative use for the otherwise dirty solvent in the parts cleaners.

HCC had found an end use for the solvent that, until then, had been deemed hazardous by strict EPA laws. However, HCC was taking their customers dirty solvent not to a recycling center or even a dreaded landfill, but was instead providing it to another company who would then use it in its roofing products. This entire process began with HCC delivering its virgin solvent to and removing it from the customer as a product, thus reducing the customer's hazardous wastes generator status, overall costs and of course time spent on tracking and reporting to the EPA. At the time, FWM was getting a recycled solvent that was being removed as a hazardous waste and therefore this HCC program was intriguing to Watson, but he wanted to make sure the HCC solvent was a good product before agreeing to anything concretely. Gadson

and Blake were quick to point out that they would set FWM up with a parts cleaning unit and the solvent on a trial basis, let them use it for a month and then, if it were satisfactory, proceed from there. Watson again liked what he was hearing and agreed to the free trial.

From there the partnership has developed a great deal. FWM was



using the solvent parts cleaners for general maintenance and cleaning, but they also had 30-gallon tanks that used an aqueous-based cleaner on the finished product. Once more, Gadson and Blake had an option as HCC provided aqueous-based cleaners and tanks on regularly scheduled service intervals. FWM happened to own these cabinet tanks while the solvent units were leased. HCC explained that they were able to service the owned units through their customer-owned machine service. As done previously with the solvent, HCC let FWM try the aqueous cleaner at no charge to make sure it was satisfactory.

With the parts cleaning side of things now covered, Watson began to discuss oil and universal waste disposal services needs. Once more, HCC had a program to assist with both, as they were and are a fully licensed and insured waste disposal service company.

One more concern for Watson was that FWM has several different facilities on their grounds and each one has its own dedicated manager approved to sign any vendor paperwork. This may be troublesome for a company that does not have the same representative doing the services each time. HCC was able to handle this concern by dedicating the same service representative to do the FWM services each time the need arose. In fact, even as HCC grew at a rapid pace and service routes developed and changed,

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Gadson and Blake made sure the same representative was at FWM every time to avoid confusion or a slip in the quality of service.

Enter 2011—after nearly eight years of working together, HCC continues to stand by their promise and dedication to Watson and FWM. Recently, HCC's Nate Klaehn, the dedicated service representative, installed the HCC patented, new, aqueous-based, mobile, 2725 combination parts cleaner. This innovative unit offers users the standard sink style parts cleaner on top while also providing a turntable inside for parts to be set on and cleaned by jet sprays. This unit was ideal for FWM in that they could then move one of the units they owned to another location and employ the 2725 unit where that 30-gallon unit once sat. The 2725 has a small footprint but can clean bigger parts, rests on heavy duty casters, and its 15 minute rotating cleaning cycle allows workers to let the unit do the cleaning while they get back to their duties.

All of these options are proving very resourceful to FWM. This type of innovation, along with dedication to customer service and satisfaction, has made Watson and FWM very pleased all the way around. As stated, FWM looks to build partnerships with all of its vendors and although they have had to move away from some because of their inability to deliver on this goal, HCC has come through time and time again and it makes Watson proud to say, "We consider HCC our business partners. Their ongoing concern for our needs, attention to detail and dedication to doing the job correctly each and every time is something we have grown accustomed to and know we can count on."

FWM's dedication to its products, employees and even vendors has enabled it to grow from a small wire mill in 1970 to the market leader for custom-drawn precision fine wire for medical and surgical products in the United States. Meanwhile, HCC, using a similar approach in the way it values customers, has expanded

from 10 locations nationwide to more than 60 in just a little over a decade. Five of these HCC locations are in Indiana, and another three assist in covering the entire state.

FWM has been an IMA member since 1988, and HCC has been a member and the preferred vendor of parts cleaning and industrial waste disposal services since 2005. The IMA/HCC program entitles not only FWM but all IMA members to significant savings on all HCC products and services, including no installation or waste profile fees—as well as a 25 percent discount.

For more information on the IMA/HCC program, contact HCC's Jim Skelton at 847-783-5110, jim.skelton@crystal-clean.com, or visit the HCC website: www.crystal-clean.com. The IMA contact is Jeff Goodwin, who can be reached at 317-713-5936, jgoodwin@imaweb.com, or visit the IMA website at <http://www.imaweb.com/crystalclean.asp>. ❖







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Check out our website; www.crystal-clean.com or call 877-938-7948 and ask for Jim Skelton for further information on our services and special IMA member only discounts and pricing.