

## SHOP TALK

### ARE YOU DOING ANYTHING TO MAKE YOUR BUSINESS MORE "GREEN"?

"We started a recycling program a few years ago, but have not added any other 'green' aspects recently."

—David Francis, president, *Beau Industrie Limited, Scarborough, ON*

"We are actively evaluating methods to reduce all our waste, whether it is recycling of general waste, or recycling of our process water using vacuum evaporation based on the latest German technology. We have also installed more energy efficient lighting throughout the plants, replacing standard fluorescent lighting with metal halide lamps."

—Julie Ross, system manager, *Whe Field Limited, Mississauga, ON*

"In our business, there is not much that we can do—our scrap gets recycled, we don't have any emissions that are harmful. We always try not to drive any more than we have to. Local government rules make us green already."

—Gary Day, president, *Ontario Laser Cutting, Mississauga, ON*

"At the moment, the only thing we've done is, we've got a quote from a company that supplies interior lighting for businesses. This company goes with the more energy-efficient bulbs as opposed to the old fluorescent bulbs. So, we got a quote on replacing basically all the lighting in the office, shop and factory. It would probably pay for itself in two or three years, plus it would use less energy, give off less heat. It's something we're debating at the moment. If things pick up and we get busier, then next year we might consider doing that."

Everybody's trying to go green. Even the machines we're looking at down the road are more energy-efficient than the machines we currently have. The machine builders nowadays are focusing on trying to make machines use less energy in their non-use cycle—so if the machine's not running, it's using 30 per cent less energy or so."

—Steve Sabat, president, *Iron Tool and Mold, Windsor, ON*

"We are a small manufacturing shop and have a very small impact. But we dispose of cleaning fluids and solvents in the correct ways and have switched our lighting and electrical systems to save as much energy as possible. And we try really hard to recycle everything we can. If everybody makes

changes even if we are a small company, it will in the big scale make an impact."

—Steve Giffin, vice president, *Waco Precision Part Manufacturing, Toronto, ON*

"We have introduced environmentally friendly parts cleaning, for the environment and employees. Unfortunately, I can't recycle cardboard without great expense."

—Peter Sibley, president, *BCF Automation, Mississauga, ON*

Timely question. Let's start the answer by saying all manufacturers want to be greener. Unfortunately, wanting is not the same as doing. Here are a few things we have done at A-Line, for example.

1. Transport. We added one more truck on the road. While that sounds ridiculous, we were using our 3/4 ton pickup truck to pick up a dozen 1/4 inch screws, for example. We added a relatively fuel efficient light truck and now that does probably 80 per cent of our deliveries and pickups. Added insurance and

maintenance is offset by the savings in gas.

2. Lighting. We are switching our lighting tubes and fixtures to the new sunlight bulbs. Skylights and glass doors have also been added to enhance natural light. Nothing drove me crazier than coming to check on parts here at night and find half the lights in the plant on, so now

most lights work on motion detectors and go off automatically. If no one is here, all the lights go off. A side benefit is security. If a break in occurs, lights start tripping on throughout the plant. Off premise security cameras can see immediately if something is awry.

3. Heat. Your plant needs heat and you would think there is not that much to do once you have high efficiency furnaces and proper insulation, but that is not true. For instance, in our wire EDM department, we have 4 large water chillers that kick out a large volume of warm air. With a little bit of ingenuity and trial and error, we developed a series of in line ductwork that directs the heat inside in the winter and outside in the summer so we don't have to cool it.

4. Blue box...we are trying. This one seems to have a little trouble gaining traction. Bottles and paper always seem to end up in the garbage. There is no green bin program (foodstuffs) for our commercial building.

—Rob Muru, president, *A-Line Precision Tool, Toronto, ON*

