

A 2005 Eco-Efficiency Success Story



Precision Powder Coating Dartmouth, NS

Practical and Innovative: Finding Treasures in Trash

Precision Powder Coating Inc. was established in 1999, and is owned and operated by two ex-Canadian Navy personnel. With combined experience of over 33 years in the Navy, Dave Valley and Earl Haggerty learned that while you're at sea, all you have is what you've got! The ingenuity and versatility that they demonstrated fixing complex ship components is evident in many facets of their joint venture business: they run their workplace using a 'waste not, want not' philosophy.

Located in Burnside Industrial Park, Precision Powder Coating specializes in powder coating, a finishing process which fuses a highly protective and decorative finish to a wide variety of industrial and commercial metal products. The items to be coated are first cleaned thoroughly, and then a fine color powder is electrostatically applied. From there, products move into the curing oven where the powder melts into the desired coating.

Driven by both fiscal prudence and an innate awareness of environmental issues, Dave and Earl bring to life the saying that 'one person's trash is another's treasure'. They have diligently salvaged old materials and re-fabricated them for continued use, limiting the need for new natural resources, such as timber, petroleum, fibers and other materials. The following are just a few examples.

Hooks for hanging metals for the powder coating process are fabricated in-house from wire reclaimed from a cable installation company and used coat hangers. Cardboard for packing and shipping is recycled from materials used by other companies and wrapping paper is primarily used newspaper. All work benches are from companies that had surplus equipment. All shelving is made from used lumber and crating material. All office equipment other than the PC tower and printer are used. Even Tim Horton trays have found a use - the compressor is lined with the trays for noise abatement. Obviously, Dave and Earl know how to scavenge!

The commitment of the innovative owners to recover and reuse materials is truly exceptional - but there is more! There are many advantages to using powder to 'paint' their products over the wet spray which requires a solvent carrier. The absence of organic solvents reduces health risks and hazards associated with inhalation. Home-made paint tubes and canisters, created for each powder colour, reduces powder wastage. Overspray is collected (swept up) and can be reused for odd jobs, consequently little material is wasted. The small amount of waste (no more than the size of a hockey puck each week) and the non-toxic character of the powder significantly reduces waste disposal problems. Contributing to the environmentally friendliness of this process is the effort to use bio-degradable cleaners and de-greasers to prepare the metallic objects as much as possible. Furthermore, the bake oven is turned on only when it is needed and takes only a few minutes to heat.

By limiting the release of pollutants and wastes and increasing production efficiency, Precision Powder Coating Inc. is continually working to reduce its impact on the environment. The Eco-Efficiency Centre is pleased to recognize Precision Powder Coating Inc. for its innovation in reusing materials and their common sense solutions to environmental challenges.

