

Looking behind the doors of PECo Inc.

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What began as a machining/toolmaking shop behind Emmert Studebaker's house is now a multi-plant corporation that services such companies as Ford, General Motors, Honda and Kodak.

Tipp City's Process Equipment Company (PECo) started in 1946 and was incorporated in 1953. Its motto is Single Source Simplicity: "A single company with the highest quality people in the business; one source for all your manufacturing needs; simplicity itself."

The company boasts of four separate divisions, all of which have grown out of market need, and has spawned two other businesses in Bosma and Trimble. The different areas serve the automotive, defense, power commercial and industrial products manufacturing industries.

PECo's original and still biggest division is the Process Manufacturing Group, which specializes in precision machining, fabrication and grinding of large metal products for industrial markets.

"It's the garage that never quit growing," says Director of Marketing Debbie Wanamaker.

The Design, Engineering and Assembly (DEA) division specializes in welding systems. A customer comes with a concept, and the DEA unit will put together a production line for them. DEA offers high speed pulse weld-

"The diversity in business is one of our strengths," says van Haaren. "We've always been flexible in what we've provided the customer."

They are also known for holding on to their employees. The average length of service is 17-18 years. One gentleman recently retired after 42 years of employment.

One of the reasons is that in working with such large machinery, PECo places a strong emphasis on safety.

"We really want them to walk home in the same shape they came here with," says Wanamaker.

So PECo holds a "safety bingo" for every employee.

Each day no accident occurs, a number is drawn and employees can punch it off on their bingo sheet. If there is an accident, the bingo sheets are thrown away and it starts all over again.

The longest time period has been almost 1000 days accident-free. Since the bingo winners get prizes, the longer the bingo goes, the more stuff the employee can get.

"It's the peer pressure now," grins Wanamaker. PECo headquarters is located at the corner of Hwy 202 and Studebaker.

For more information, visit their website at www.peco-us.com or call 667-4451.



Photo by Joyell Collins

PECo has been a Tipp City area business since 1946. (MSD), was founded the same way. MSD designs and manufactures the PECo Next Dimension 300 and 430.

They are MS Windows based gear measurement systems, which perform geometrical and generative tests to make sure gears, splines and cylindrical components are working properly.

"Customers said they didn't like what was available," van Haaren recalls. "We said, hey we can do that."

In 1999, MSD opened. This last year, though, was their first big economically successful year.

"It's a slower pull cycle from the market," explains van Haaren.

The whole PECo group had a successful 2006. They celebrated record sales and a 90 percent revenue growth increase since 2003. The variety in equipment and services offered is what has helped PECo survive. Even if one area was lacking in revenue, the other divisions helped the company continue to stay afloat.

The fourth section, Metrology Systems Division