



- Anniversaries
- New Employees
- Employee Wedding
- Birth Announcement

(continued on page 7)



SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS by: Mike Wakeen

Safety is our primary concern at Empire. Our EMS audit (see next page) discovered areas of concern—not just from an environmental perspective, but also from a human one. The EMS policy states, “We will develop production methods that implement sustainable environmental, health, and safety (EHS) practices into all aspects of our operations.” When the audit findings concluded, management and the safety team went to work, using this information to implement procedures to minimize safety risks to the employees.

One change saw a concern regarding solvent rags left out in the open. If those solvents evaporate into the air, it causes unnecessary exposure to volatile organic compounds (VOCs). A procedure was written for rags to be disposed into the proper red solvent receptacle after use to minimize these exposures. We also cut rags in half to reduce waste.

Empire also invested in proper aerosol can disposal. Aerosol cans have the potential risk of explosion kickback from flammable contents if not stored or discarded properly. The equipment we purchased for this task fits on a 55-gallon drum, over its opening. A can is placed inside the device. With a lever, it punctures the aerosol can, allowing the solids inside to be collected by the drum and gases to be filtered. The empty can is then placed in a special recycle bin, which maintenance collects weekly.

Always keep vigilant about safety issues, and bring up concerns during our daily meetings. Healthy and safety are of the utmost importance.

SAFETY MEAL by: Ellen Monhaut

In July, we hit a safety milestone of 365+ days with no lost-time due to accidents! In celebration, Empire provided a safety dinner for all employees that was catered by Festival.

Along with the meal, 20 employees were randomly selected to win \$20 cash each! Congratulations to: Ginger Anderson, Steve Johnson, Rhonda Peterson, Ashleigh Kane, Miranda Klema, Lori Taube, Angie Severson, Jeff Gierok, Kathy Inglett, Roman Kamrowski, Steve Nelson, Phillip Treu, Benjamin Bakken, Josh Parnow, Vanessa Fox, Steve Limpert, Josh Leisgang, Danielle Helke, Jacob Olson, and Deborah Felix.

SAFETY COMMITTEE

SAFETY COORDINATOR

Keith Cook.....R&D

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Nancy Gilbertson.....Customer Service
Curtis Johnson.....I.T.
Tom Donaldson.....Digital Manager
Theresa Antony.....Small Value Stream Operator
Shane Hulburt.....Doming Supervisor
Bob Fischer.....Small Value Stream Operator
Mike Wakeen.....Director of Manufacturing

EMS AUDIT BY: Cathy Buttell

Empire is required to perform an external audit every three years for our EMS. This is in accordance with our DNR Green Tier compliance. Our external audit was performed on June 30th, 2022.

The audit is based on ISO 14001:2004 requirements, including Green Tier Law, §299.83(dg), and its objectives are:

1. To determine the conformity of our processes and documented procedures.
2. To determine effectiveness of the management system to ensure the client organization is continually meeting its specified objectives.
3. To identify areas for potential improvement of the management system.

On a tour of the facility, two observations of ineffective environmental management were noted:

Flammables/Spray Cans in the Machine Shop

There was no work instruction in place for disposing of aerosol cans, so steel and aerosol ended up in the same place. Immediate steps were taken to remove the cans from the scrap material waste receptacle. They were placed in a separate bin labeled for aerosol cans. Cans not in use were placed back in their proper locations.

Our plant manager took steps to research **WI DNR publication WA-1784** for aerosol can Management. He implemented a work instruction for proper disposal of Aerosol Cans. This instruction is located in our **QMS: Policies, Empire Sustainability: Documentation: Waste Management folder**. The work instruction states that aerosol cans be thrown in a clearly marked receptacle for only aerosol cans. The waste aerosol cans will be picked up weekly by maintenance, and the maintenance team will puncture and drain the cans, utilizing a newly purchased aerosol can puncture tool. The waste can then be thrown out in scrap or garbage. Employees are in the process of being trained on this new work instruction.



Solvent Rags in Small Value Stream (solvent-containing rag management)

It was verbally communicated to employees to use the solvent rags multiple times before throwing them into the red solvent waste receptacle. This was to conserve rags, but no written documentation supported this instruction, and rags were seen lying around the area.

(continued on next page)

GREEN COMMITTEE

Jennifer Schloesser.....	Creative Director
Cathy Buttell.....	Project Manager
Keith Cook.....	R&D
Jeff Gierok.....	Electrical Technician





EMS AUDIT *(...continued...)*

Management is implementing production to use ½ rags. A work instruction has been created for the proper use and disposal of solvent rags, and all necessary areas will be trained to the new instruction. **"Solvent Use and Rag Disposal.pdf"** is located in our **QMS: Policies, Safety folder**.

In the audit's findings, it was noted: *"Empire continues to improve outcomes in society and nature and achieves superior environmental performance through innovation in production processes, increased automation, and technical developments that improve productivity, reduce energy consumption and lower costs. Empire demonstrates outstanding forward thinking, a culture of innovation and an uncanny ability to fabricate the future."*

WISCONSIN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS COUNCIL

by: Jennifer Schloesser

About Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council (WSBC):

The Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council (WSBC) is a nonprofit that helps businesses advance sustainability. We support businesses through an array of programming, education, resources, and tools to help businesses integrate sustainability into their organizations. WSBC helps build Wisconsin's sustainable leaders by providing resources and guidance to improve environmentally-friendly practices.

Empire Becomes a Member of the Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council:

Manufacturing with UV LED technology has put Empire at the forefront of sustainability and is leading the print industry with this technology. It has been our focus to share this technology and our story. Part of this journey is to join associations with like-minded companies to help learn and grow from one another. This year, we joined the Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council (WSBC). Through this membership, we had opportunities to participate and be recognized for what we do at Empire Screen Printing.

Empire is a Finalist for Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council for Innovative Service Award:

Empire was recently selected as one of three finalists for the WSBC Innovative Service Award, highlighting UV LED ink curing technology for screen printing. The two other companies were SolarShare WI Coop with Cooperative Solar Investment Service and Legacy Solar Coop with Tax Sponsorship.

These awards celebrate recipients for environmental, social, and governance leadership. The finalists demonstrate leadership, initiative, and innovation, making measurable impacts across their businesses and the communities they serve.

The winners will be announced at the WSBC Awards Reception at Miron Construction in Titiletown, Green Bay, on November 15th, 2022.

How to Build and Leverage an Environmental Management System (Webinar)

In June, we had the opportunity to be a part of a webinar put on by the Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council. This webinar focused on, "How to build and leverage an Environmental Management System (EMS)," on June 23rd, 2022. The webinar discussed the development of an environmental management system (EMS) and how to leverage it for continuous improvement. The panelists shared tips and best practices for data collection and management, how to best use that data for decision-making, and how

to work across departments to enhance communication and organizational goals.

Participants included Jennifer Birkholz, Environmental Business Support Coordinator for the WI Department of National Resources and representing the Green Tier Program. Jessica Haasser, the Quality and EHS Manager for Inpro Corporation, and Jennifer Schloesser, Creative Director at Empire Screen Printing.

PRINTING UNITED EXPO by: Jennifer Schloesser

Empire, for the first time, exhibited at this year's PRINTING United Expo, October 19th - 21st in Las Vegas, NV. PRINTING United Expo is the most dynamic and comprehensive printing event in the world. Bringing together the entire printing industry under one roof is a strategic response to meet the industry's needs. This approach delivers the strongest ROI for printers and attendees by providing one place to access new applications, technology, and products. A booth at PRINTING United Expo is an opportunity to support our current customers and produce new opportunities.

Empire showcased medium value stream's automation initiatives and UV LED technology, reaching other printers and turn them into customers. The great work that our team accomplished over the last couple of years deserves to be recognized, and this event helps support our goals to grow our business. Empire was represented by John Freismuth, Alexis Marsh, Mike Wakeen, Doug Kuehn, and Jennifer Schloesser.

CONSTANT CONTACT by: Jennifer Schloesser

Join our marketing email network. If you are an employee, fill out a card on the TEAM boards and drop it in the Red HR box. We will register you to start receiving the latest Empire news, publications, and upcoming events.

For customers who wish to join and receive weekly product announcements, publications, and Empire news, [join on Empire's Home page](#).

PARTNERS IN PRINTING 2023 by: Jennifer Schloesser

Empire's 7th biennial Partners In Printing Expo is scheduled for July 25th - July 27th, 2023. The Partners In Printing - 3M Golf Open will be at Fox Hollow Golf Course. This event will raise money for The Boys and Girls Club of the Greater La Crosse Area. The professional learning and trade show will take place on Wednesday and Thursday at The Stoney Creek Hotel in Onalaska, Wisconsin. Empire tours will be throughout the day on Thursday. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more exciting announcements.

About Partners in Printing: In 2010, a small group of employees organized the first national sales meeting at Empire Screen Printing in Onalaska, Wis. What started as an opportunity to bring our national sales reps together to network ideas through print education turned into a multifaceted mission: to provide education on printing, promote the industry and its suppliers, provide unique networking opportunities, illustrate how to be good stewards of the environment, and leave a legacy for future generations.





WI MOTY 2022 by: Steve Limpert

The MOTY Award banquet was well organized, professional, and provided an opportunity to meet individuals from a wide variety of manufacturing sectors throughout Wisconsin.

After hearing the backstory of the category winners, I considered it an honor to even be an award nominee. I met one of the judges during the event who stated Empire was doing good things, and he told me we should not give up trying to win the award. He said his company tried eight times before they finally won; a bit humbling while simultaneously motivating.

Overall a positive experience, and interesting to hear how other manufacturing companies navigated the challenges presented by the pandemic.

KAIZEN

This past August, an Order Acknowledgment Kaizen occurred to work on responding to our customers within a four-hour time period. We reached out to the members of the kaizen, and here is what some of them had to say:

"After hearing frustrations from customers regarding turnaround time for order acknowledgments, I was happy the Order Acknowledgment Kaizen was taking place. Throughout the four days, I found it interesting to see the entire process using the value stream mapping exercise to identify opportunities for improvements. The amount of knowledge and experience within the team was impressive. It was refreshing to see everyone work together constructively to improve the process. I walked away confident that we will meet our goal through continuous improvement to exceed customer expectations. Go team!!!"

- Sharon Erler (Sales Representative)

"I enjoyed being a part of the kaizen team to reduce turnaround time on incoming POs to under four hours. It was fun to watch and participate in so many conversations about the process and what we could do to eliminate waste and improve the flow. What seemed so big and daunting when we started slowly worked its way into a usable and repeatable process. I enjoyed getting to know the rest of the team and what each person's responsibilities are here at Empire. Everyone involved deserved a big pat on the back. Now comes the hard part of implementing and sustaining!"

- Mike Wakeen (Director of Manufacturing)

COMPANY PICNIC (continued)







ANNIVERSARIES

MAY

Lori Taube.....43 years
 Travis Brush.....32 years
 Lisa Massoth.....32 years
 Sam Sokolik.....29 years
 Sheldon True.....25 years
 Tom Donaldson.....25 years
 Deb Gilbertson.....25 years
 Katie Schaller.....17 years
 Autum Jacobs.....14 years
 Brian Hundt.....12 years
 Brian Subjek.....10 years
 Jacky Vue.....9 years
 Kiecila Fruetel.....8 years
 Evelyn Mihalovic.....6 years
 Cory Krajewski.....6 years
 Brenda Hansen.....5 years
 Karen Conway.....4 years
 Diana Kurtz.....4 years
 Megan Caacbay.....4 years
 Amie Miller.....4 years
 Nick Lubinsky.....1 year
 Jordan Witt.....1 year

JUNE

Dawn Gorniak.....38 years
 Debbie Michel.....37 years
 Russ Kuehn.....27 years
 Rebecca Stark.....26 years
 Sheila Albers.....23 years
 Bob Fischer.....20 years
 Matt Vanderloop.....18 years
 Carina Olson.....16 years
 Sarah Erickson.....15 years
 Rebecca Burg.....11 years

Codi Jacobs.....10 years
 Kaylynn McDowell.....7 years
 Britney Henkel.....7 years
 Ron Tilson.....6 years
 Charles Beck.....6 years
 Audra Moline.....6 years
 Brad Ames.....5 years
 Raven Erickson.....1 year
 Brad Cook.....1 year
 Hannah Hulburt*.....1 year

JULY

Ralph Young.....31 years
 Laramie Schwier.....28 years
 Joann Anderson.....25 years
 Curt Wier.....23 years
 Teresa Sullivan.....23 years
 Rob Kranski.....18 years
 Colleen McCann*.....13 years
 Rob Wellnitz.....12 years
 Josh Leisgang.....10 years
 Zach Johnson.....6 years
 Mckenzie Adank*.....6 years
 Ethan Walker.....5 years
 David Hulburt.....1 year
 Tanya Thompson.....1 year
 Dave Kubas.....1 year

AUGUST

Sue Maule.....39 years
 Angie Pierce.....39 years
 Mike Smith.....35 years
 Steve Johnson.....32 years
 Lee Vieth*.....31 years
 Jeff Meyer.....31 years

Trish Lastofka.....24 years
 Steve Lechnir.....24 years
 Doug Kuehn.....17 years
 Levi Adank.....17 years
 Ellen Monhaut.....10 years
 Troy Siverhus.....8 years
 Mary Parris.....8 years
 Rhonda Knobloch.....4 years
 Amber Williams.....4 years
 Jacob Hulburt.....2 years
 Casey Wilkins.....2 years
 Brittany Clements.....2 years
 Chris Rogowski.....1 year
 Jack Przywojski.....1 year
 Logan Brown*.....1 year
 Dalton Johnson.....1 year
 Anita Valley.....1 year

* indicates part time employee

NEW EMPLOYEES

Robert Holte Jr.
 Gavin Burr
 Cory Freehill
 Ryan Becker
 Ethan Anderson
 Paul Stevenson
 Chris Pederson
 Tim Fischer
 Janie Uy
 Abigail Peterson
 William Xiong
 Katrina Murphy
 William Sabine
 Penny Carlston

EMPLOYEE ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT

Congratulations to Empire employees Ashleigh and Jacob Kane on their wedding!

Ashleigh and Jacob got married on May 29, 2022.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Congrats to Jennifer Jahnke (Auto Emp) on the birth of her daughter, Lola!

Lola was born on Tuesday, August 9, at 8:27 pm, weighing 6 lb., 2 oz., and measuring 19.25 inches long!

Deadline for the next
 newsletter: 12/29/2022



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