



Applied Coatings & Linings Becomes PaintSquare Partner

Appplied Coatings & Linings of El Monte, California, a shop painting contractor specializing in the application of high technology materials, has become a PaintSquare Partner.

Jim Horton, the President of Applied Coatings & Linings, became the coatings specialist for the company in 1972 after his father, Ed Horton, acquired the shop painting business of Los Angeles-based Frank L. Bunch Company. Ed Horton founded his company in 1950, and specialized in the field sandblasting of stucco houses and other structures. In the early 1960's, he established a small shop operation for sandblasting and painting of metal parts, but the shop painting operation remained small until the company moved to its present site and acquired the business of the Bunch Company.

From the very beginning of his full-time tenure with the company, Jim Horton was confronted with technical challenges that he met and overcame. He was immediately challenged with learning to apply inorganic zinc-rich coatings, and with establishing a QC program to meet the requirements of the nuclear power industry, for which the company did a great deal of work in the 1970's, including coating and lining of airlock and reactor components, as well as piping.

He also adopted the use of high performance epoxy and polyurethane systems in the 1970's and encouraged customers to select these materials for their greater durability than the alkyds that were traditionally used. Later, he developed the capability to apply phenolics and FBE's and to cure them in a baking oven.

Following the demise of new construction in the nuclear industry and slowdowns in steel fabricating in Southern California, the company began to acquire the majority of its customers among equipment manufacturers in areas such as filtration, light-



ing, and components for offshore platforms. This business has led to the strong specialty focus of Horton's shop on vessels and components that require a high level of craftsmanship.

The need for quality control in nuclear coating work, with its basis in documenting procedures and results and managing data, got Horton started very early (1975) in using the computer for his business. Initially, he used a mini-computer and learned to write software for automating data acquisition, and he employed a bar code system on steel parts to track the progress of the work. He later developed a PC network to operate his data system, and in the early days of the internet, he became interested in using this technology for his business, both to acquire technical data and to attract customers.

In 1995, Horton developed and launched corrosion.com, an internet portal to provide technical information to the protective coatings industry. He attracted a very substantial audience of users, and acquired business for Applied Coatings & Linings by advertising his coating business on the site.

In the year 2000, Horton acquired both SSPC-QP 3 and ISO 9002 certifications for his shop, and he credits these certifications with an increase in his business. His success is based upon achieving quality, and these certifications attest in a tangible way to that fact. "Quality, consistency, and integrity all fit together," he says, "in how you deal with customers. It comes down to doing what you say you're going to do."