

MASONRY NEWS

Sponsored by:  **EZ Grout Corporation**

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Federal Stone Industries, Inc.
192 Water Street,
Towson, Maryland 21286

Dear Mr. Lang

From one business owner to another, I felt it was my duty to write to you and let you know about my recent experience with your staff, mainly Greg, Scott, and Dan.

Many years ago, an old school professor told me, "a company will live or die by it's people!" Well, I must tell you, your company is definitely living! Your staff could not have been more accommodating.

Here's my story:

Our Fleming mixer- circa 1967, had undergone several speed reducer replacements and had numerous patches and rewelds to the drum. But she was a great mixer and has served us well for many years. About a month ago our shop foreman came to me with "that look." He tells me the mixer is making "that noise" -again. A sound we've heard before, just before the speed reducer stopped working - not good! We made our inspections and determined we had about two weeks before it would seize up. We made our plan, crossed our fingers and hoped Fleming would come through -again! Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond their control, they were unable to help.

Enter the three amigos from EZ Grout. After some chit chat, CD viewing, web surfing and talking with one of your satisfied customers, it was decided that EZ Grout's Mud Hog might be just what we needed. Greg suggested coming to Ohio and seeing the Mud Hog in action. Three days later, I'm in your facility on Watertown Road, meeting Greg and Scott. I was shocked at the size difference. Your 20 c.f. mixer looked half the size of our 16 c.f. mixer! I wasn't looking for a smaller mixer, that's for sure. Immediately, Greg and Scott started to crunch the numbers and moved into design mode. Without breaking a sweat, they felt that building a longer unit would solve several problems. By the end of the day, they had come up with the solution and your company had sold another unit!

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Exactly, 15 days later, I'm now at your plant on Rt. 60 personally picking up the new mixer. Upon inspection, Scott noted a few minor details which he quickly resolved. Because this was a "custom built" mixer, Greg was very thorough with his inspection. He discovered some issues that weren't so minor. Enter Dan, your plant manager.

With a shop full of employees, Dan made me feel like I was the only reason he came to work that day and his only mission was to satisfy me! He took full control, but listened to our concerns. He understood that I had driven 6 hours and leaving without this mixer was not an option, nor had he ever considered it. Adjustments were made; cutting, welding, rewelding, and painting all was done quickly and professionally. A few hours later the mixer was ready for loading (after a few pictures of course).

In summary, I feel it's important, when good people do good things; they ought to be told about it. With so much negative press about the American workforce, it's nice to work with a company where quality and commitment does mean something. Please express my appreciation to Greg, Scott, and Dan.

Thank you for the opportunity to purchase one of your products. I would be honored to chat with anyone considering the use of the Mud Hog in their operation.

Sincerely,

David G. Rethemeyer
VP Sales and Marketing

PS. Please tell Greg I'll forward pictures to him of the installation.

Latest News

Have you heard? EZ Grout has fabulous special low pricing for a limited time.

Masonry Showcase March 29-31, 2006 Las Vegas, NV See us at booth 2229 with all of EZ Grout Corporations latest innovations.

Seminar Specially Designed for Mason Contractors

Due to request from mason contractors across the country, Damian Lang, President of Lang Masonry Contractors and EZ Grout Corporation will be hosting another seminar on Rewarding and Challenging Employees for Profits in Masonry. The next seminar will be held on April 20-21, 2006. We expect to have a full house again. Due to limited seating, the first 35 paid attendees will be accepted. For more information call Kerri at 1-800-417-9272 ext 122.



Is this your Hog?



Last issues winner of EZ Grout's Hog spotting was Krallman Masonry. Krallman Masonry is out of Ft. Mitchell, KY. A Grout Hog® was spotted at a masonry jobsite along interstate 71 near Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. This issue's hog spotting features a Mud Hog® along with a Hog Leg® bracing system. These two items were located along interstate 77 in Ohio by the Akron/Canton airport. If this is your Grout Hog® call 1-800-417-9272 ext. 115 to find out what prize you won.

Call today : 1-800-417-9272 www.ezgrout.com

Masonry News - Safety First



(Info provided courtesy of Keller's Construction Toolbox Talks, Tools, Hand & Power copyright 2003)

Tools, Hand & Power

From a simple screwdriver to a reciprocating cut-off saw, tools are the lifeblood of the construction industry. No matter how simple or sophisticated, they all can be dangerous if not used properly.

Condition of tools

All hand and power tools and similar equipment, whether furnished by the employer or employee, must be safe.

Guarding

When power operated tools are designed to have guards, they must be equipped with the guards when in use.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Employees using hand or power tools must be provided with proper personal protective equipment (PPE) for protection when exposed to:

- Falling, flying, abrasive, or splashing objects.
- Harmful dusts, fumes, mists, vapors, or gases.

All PPE must meet the requirements of and be maintained according to Subparts D-Occupational Health and Environment Controls, and E-Personal Protective and Life Saving Equipment.

Switches

Switch action on power tools is important. For some tools a positive "on-off" control is fine, others require momentary contact "on-off" control, and still others require a constant pressure switch.

Employee Training

The OSHA rules require the following training for employees using hand and power tools:

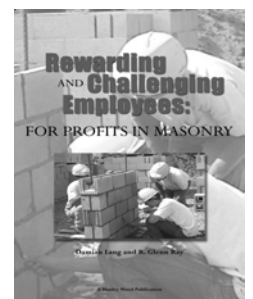
- Only employees qualified by training or experience can operate equipment and machinery.
- Employees must be trained to recognize and avoid unsafe conditions and the regulations applicable to his work environment to control or eliminate the hazards.
- Employees required to use respiratory protective equipment approved for use in atmospheres immediately dangerous to life must be thoroughly trained in its use.

Training Tips

This could include time to explain the defects of tools pulled from service. Go over your procedure for tagging tools as defective and explain they should not be used until repaired.

Now Available!
\$29.95 + S&H

You asked for it and it's finally here! An easy to read book on rewarding and challenging employees. See how Damian Lang, owner of Lang Masonry, has turned what once was a two man crew into a \$7 million masonry company largely due to incentive plans. Achieve a unique balance in safety, quality, production, and employees Compensation!



For more information call 1-800-417-9272 and ask for Kerri Huck

Masonry News Contractor Tip of the Month

by: Damian Lang, President, Lang Masonry Contractors & EZ Grout Corp.

Use Only the Best Ingredients

The single way to have the best company is to only hire and maintain the best employees. This idea is no different than preparing a meal; if you add the best ingredients, you will get the best entrée.

When I was growing up, I always believed that mom was the best cook in the world. However, mom didn't have much competition with which I could compare her food. Mom always used generic ingredients in her entrées. With nine kids and money being tight, it was probably the only way my parents could keep us all fed! So if it were ketchup that she needed to add, it was the IGA brand, not the name brand version. The same held true for the rest of the ingredients.

Then I got married and found out that my wife, Donna, is a better cook than my mom (but, don't tell mom I said that). After watching Donna and mom cook, I found there is only one difference in what they were doing. Donna uses only the top quality, name brand ingredients instead of generic in her recipes. The results are a better meal.

The same is true in business. In the case of businesses though, the ingredients are your employees. Are you trying to become the best in the masonry industry? If so, are you trying to do it with staff and field employees that are not doing their part? Do you keep a secretary or manager on staff thinking this person is the best because you have no one to compare him or her to?

It happens in every industry. We deal with several companies whose people can't even bill us correctly for their services. For example, one of my lawyers has a secretary who can't bill us properly for his time. She is only there because she has been there forever and this lawyer has no one else's work to compare her work to. And even worse, he has never required her to seek training to do her job properly. Their paperwork and billing is so bad that it will probably cause him to lose us as a customer.

Don't let this happen to you. Watch your employees and make sure they are doing what you hired them to do. If they are in charge of a certain department such as billing, then they should learn how to fill out draw request forms and change orders properly to insure you get paid on time. If someone is constantly coming to you to do his or her work, encourage this person to get the proper training and to take charge of his or her own department. And if they refuse to do this, consider getting someone who will. With others to compare them to, you may be surprised at the extra load the right person can take off your back.

Remember this: If your people are not striving every day to do their jobs the best they can, maybe they are generic ingredients and you should consider something better. And if they are striving and doing the best they can, make sure they are being paid well for their accomplishments. Paying a little more for the best ingredients can make all the difference in the world.



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