



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MIKE SHEEHY OF EXTRUTECH PLASTICS, INC.

2007 MCA Trendsetting Product of the Year: **Extrutech Plastics** WRITTEN BY WENDI WINTERS

Products for interior and exterior walls and ceilings.

DAVID WEST KNOWS EXACTLY WHY THIS YEAR'S MCA AWARD FOR PRODUCT OF THE YEAR, WAS EXTRUTECH PLASTICS. AS A DISTRIBUTOR AND INSTALLER FOR THE COMPANY, HE DESCRIBES THE BENEFITS EXPERIENCED BY ONE NEW CAR WASH, LIGHTHOUSE CAR WASH IN PASADENA, MARYLAND, AS "SO CLEAN AND BRIGHT, IT LOOKS LIKE AN OPERATING ROOM."

Wash owners who've used the product are singing its praises, too.

A few miles away, Scott Wolfkill has a completely new carwash, built on a site where a wash was originally built in 1964. Where the old wash was utilitarian and did the job, the new wash is bright, attractive and – dare we say it? – chic.

Wolfkill has installed a plethora of

cutting-edge equipment, hardware and software. He's planted a sophisticated array of native grasses and eye-catching flowers in manicured, mulched beds. But, it's the attractive, sparkling self-serve bays and touchless tunnels, housed in a modern, sophisticated brick-trimmed structure that really attracts attention.

"I used Extrutech for a couple reasons," noted Wolfkill. He originally spec'd out material from another company for the project, but the costs were higher. "I started looking at Extrutech and it performed the way I wanted. It mounts with self-tapping screws into a masonry wall or the bottom of roof trusses for ceiling mount. It has a smooth, modern-looking finish and is easy to maintain.

I have used FRP – fiberglass board – in the past, but Extrutech is thicker and easier to replace, yet has the same ability to clean. I used it on all the exterior walls and ceilings. It brightens the place up, it looks like a modern building," he said.

He also liked the fact that Extrutech paneling comes in 24-inch widths. Wolfkill ran a hand over the smooth, gleaming surface of one bay sheathed in Extrutech.

In a hysterical scene from the 1967 movie, "The Graduate," Mr. Robinson says he has some advice for Benjamin Braddock, played by Dustin Hoffman. The classic line is, "Just one word: plastics."

Mr. Robinson could have been talking about Extrutech.

"We agreed to distribute Extrutech because it's a new material," said West.

(Opposite Page) A smooth modern appearance combined with practical benefits of cleaning ease, mildew resistance, easy maintenance and affordability make Extrutech a trend setting product.

“It holds up better. It’s a better answer to the carwash industry than what’s out there. What was out there, everyone is dissatisfied with and this product seemed to solve the problem of rot, mold, mildew, algae, peeling paint and a host of other things.”

West noted that fiberglass spray products, that look like swimming pool surfacing, are expensive and hard to apply. Fiberglass reinforced panels, he said, seem to degrade after four or five years of service. “Fiberglass is a decent alternative to paint, but not the answer. Extrutech is affordable and seems to be the answer.”

Extrutech Plastics is based in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, near the shores of Lake Michigan. In addition to providing building products designed specifically for the carwash industry, the company offers PVC products for myriad uses, including custom applications, all-weather stripping and agriculture – for example, building materials for clean, airy milking barns.

Its lightweight, easy-to-install panels resist stains and chemicals. The product helps reduce maintenance costs with its easy-cleaning feature – dirt simply sprays away.

Its tongue and groove design hides its fasteners, and it is available in white, red, blue, yellow, green, beige and gray. Matching trims are also available. Panels can be trimmed to fit with a fine-toothed saw. The product averages \$2 per square foot, and 5% material discounts are offered at trade shows.

Greg Sheehy, formerly a builder for Keller Structures, founded the Wisconsin firm in 1991. It is now a division of Scandia Window Fashions, based in Tallahassee, Florida, and Sheehy is the division’s vice-president. The plant employs 60 people who work “24/7” on three shifts a day.

All the manufacturing is done in the U.S.A.,” said sales manager Scott Charles with obvious pride. “We extrude PVC (polyvinyl chloride) shutters and

a variety of other products for our markets,” he explained.

“When we took samples to the ICA show in 2001, I knew we had something and kept going with it. We now go to trade shows all over the country. Our customers number in the thousands, in every state and Canada.”

He looked at his client lists and stated that Extrutech had been installed in 2,800 to 3,500 washes already.

“One reason it’s been accepted so well is, historically, carwash owners have to paint carwash walls all the time. It’s hard to find a durable paint. Or, they use FPR, which yellows, rolls, buckles and fades,” he stated.

“We have a lot of happy customers out there,” Charles said in his deep, mellow radio voice. “Their washes look clean and bright even five years later.”

He noted in a typical metal hollow core door, “rust creeps up, two or three inches. What have you got? It corrodes bay floors and ruins shoes. An Extrutech door makes those problems go the way of the dodo.”

“We have a loyal, happy customer base. They sell our product for us. It’s really cool! They stand there, in front of our booth at trade shows, and talk about the product, how their carwash is cleaner, nicer, better and brighter.”

“It brings goosebumps on my arms!”

Annapolis-based resident, Wendi Winters, is a freelance writer, public relations consultant and Manhattanite-in-exile. Currently writing for *The Capital* and *What’s Up Annapolis*, her articles have also been published by Associated Press, Copley News Service and many other publications.

2007 MCA Trendsetting Product of the Year Nominees

Genesis Modular Buildings

Oasis Typhoon

Next ScalesStop

Rain-X® Surface Protectant

Ulster Flex Series (Shore Corporation)

WashPay Site Management System (Unitec Electronics)