

Movement Means Business in a Die Casting Facility

Wolter had the privilege to meet with Rick Winegard & Jimmy Scatchell, who are in charge of Materials Control for Inland Die Casting, in Wheeling, IL. Inland Die Casting utilizes leading-edge resources and technologies in order to deliver high quality aluminum parts to the automotive and other industries. Here's what they had to say about their material handling.

Q: Tell me about the process?

A: There are three main sections the parts flow through once the die casting process is complete. Parts first go through shotblasting, which enhances the appearance of them. Next, the parts go to the machining department, and finally to finishing.



Q: How were the parts moving to each process?

A: That was exactly what we needed to improve. The process of getting these parts to each phase and getting ready for shipment was a challenge. Once the parts were complete, the goods were



sitting up against a wall waiting to be delivered. When demand increased, we realized we were sending parts that were a few months old. In our industry, traceability is critical.

Q: What did you do to improve the process?

A: We implemented FIFO (First in First Out). In order to implement the process, we needed to find a way to connect the three stations. This is where Wolter came in. We worked with Scott to develop a conveyor system that could easily and more effectively transport parts.

Q: What was the solution?

A: Conveyors take the parts from shotblasting to the machining department. Another set of conveyors connect machining to the finishing area before the parts go to the shipping dock, and ultimately onto a truck for delivery. As you can see, the conveyors are situated on the floor making it easy for us to transport large quantities of heavy parts.

Q: What benefits did you uncover from the connectivity?

A: Quality control and time savings. If we have any concerns about a part, we'll know right away, and know where we can find it. Under the



previous system, it could take as long as a couple of months. In terms of timing, we're much more efficient as it streamlined our processes.

Now that we have FIFO implemented, we're working on our Lean Manufacturing processes and certification.

Q: What other material handling equipment does your facility rely on?

A: As you can imagine, our operation is multi-faceted and demands a variety of reliable material handling equipment. We have 18 lift trucks, consisting of 30k, 15k, 6k, and numerous 5k lb trucks. To support the operation, we also utilize a scissor lift, boom lift and of course a sweeper and scrubber to keep our facility clean and safe.

We also recently integrated Linde forklifts into our fleet to handle our die casting operation, as they perform the best in tough environments. As our 24 x 6 operation is sensitive to slow downs or stoppages, it's imperative that our forklift fleet performs at its peak at all times.

Q: How are you managing your equipment uptime and costs?

A: As our facility is in constant movement, we turned to Wolter to help manage our maintenance schedules and equipment costs. It's vital for our operation to work with a company that has the depth and talent to maintain our equipment, ensuring efficiency in its performance. Simultaneously, Wolter continuously works to uncover any hidden costs, while maximizing our cost of ownership.

