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Collision Division

COLLISION REPAIR

EXCLUSIVE



CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE COLLISION REPAIR INDUSTRY

Recently, I volunteered to have the EPA Design for the Environment Team come to my shop to review our equipment and procedures for compliance. I am glad that I did.

This year's Main Event will be an opportunity for everyone to break out of the winter "blahs" and see what the industry has to offer. Stretch your legs and take in a seminar. Enjoy the show.

The Big Event in the East gave me the opportunity to speak with a lot of people. One group in particular was the EPA booth staffed with the Design for the Environment crew. I signed on their sheet for a follow-up call. I will admit I was apprehensive. When was the last time you volunteered to have a federal agency come into your shop? I cannot recall it ever happening at our place. Nonetheless, I made an appointment for their visit.

You're wondering, "What is Design for the Environment?" Well let me tell you in their own words. "The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Design for the Environment (DfE) Program is a voluntary, partnership-based program that works with small companies to integrate health and environmental considerations into business decisions. DfE's approach to environmental protection

The DfE provides examples of health and safety improvements to help save [collision shops] time and money, provide a higher job quality of refinishing and a cleaner, safer shop.

emphasizes making changes and choices – in materials and processes – that prevent pollution before it is created." Sounds fancy, doesn't it? Simply stated, though, the DfE's goal is to work with collision shops to identify and adopt safer, cleaner, more efficient work habits and technologies. DfE will assist you and provide examples of health and safety improvements to help save you time and money, provide a higher job quality of refinishing and a cleaner, safer shop.

The EPA representatives who came to our shop consisted of Kevin J. Sikora, David DiFiore and Jeff Aigeldinger. These gentlemen came with a wealth of helpful information and a helpful spirit. Jeff and David spent a lot of time with our head painter discussing techniques and procedures. Kevin took a look at our building and related areas

such as exhaust fans, mixing areas, electrical services etc. They also inspected the quality and quantity of the binder full of information as well as a "grading" sheet for the many areas they cover. The "grading" sheets help to point out the areas that are satisfactory or need improvement. Areas that need improvement are listed as well as the appropriate steps to help correct those deficiencies. Employees are encouraged to ask questions and seek answers.

The DfE team brought examples of gloves, supplied air respirators and air pumps, hoses and fittings, literature, and a great video for our shop about working with urethane paints and the health risks associated with those paints.

The binder of information DfE provides is worth the visit alone. It is filled with information on procedures, safety. It also contains listings for informational agencies, equipment companies and suppliers.

The DfE Team's visit was a healthy, productive one for our shop. It has shown me that I have some work to do in some areas, but that was

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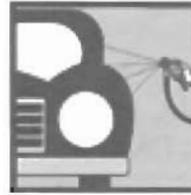
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part of the intent. If it is an indication of things to come from the federal government...I like it: less intimidation and more information.

I urge you to talk to them and let them visit your shop. They can help your shop to be safer for the environment as well as safer and more productive for you and your employees. You can contact David DiFiore at (202) 260-3374 or at difiore.david@epa.gov.

Design for the Environment Auto Refinish Project



www.epa.gov/dfe/pubs/projects/auto/

For further information on the project or site visits, contact David DiFiore at 202-260-3374 or Mary Cushmac at 202-260-4443