

NEWS

Call for hi-res images.

Contact: Timm Locke
(503) 546-7811
timm@pipelineprm.com

Warm Springs Composite Products makes an impact in the Middle East

Tribal-owned company wins contract to provide fire-rated components for world's tallest building

May 2, 2008, Warm Springs, Ore. – Central Oregon-based Warm Springs Composite Products (WSCP), a Native American-owned manufacturer of innovative fire-rated components and materials, has won the contract to supply fire-rated components for architectural doors and frames to be used in the world's tallest building, the Burj Dubai. The contract represents the biggest project ever for WSCP, surpassing the World Trade Center project in Bahrain.

“These projects are helping to build our reputation as a reliable supplier among developers in the Middle East and elsewhere overseas, and that, in turn, is helping to fuel year-over-year growth,” said Duane Darnell, WSCP's CEO. Darnell said about 30% of the company's revenue comes from overseas and about 20% of that is in the Middle East. He said the company will open a sales office in Dubai in this month.

The Burj Dubai, which broke ground in February 2005 currently (as of April 19, 2008) has 164 floors and is 636.9 meters (2,089 feet) tall, a full 350 feet taller than the Sears tower in Chicago, Ill. The tower's developers aren't saying how tall the building will get for fear that some other developer will aim to supersede it with a tower of their own. “What matters to us is that it will have more than 3,000 openings for which fire-rated components are required,” said Darnell.

The mixed-use tower will be made up of luxury residential apartments, high-end office space, as well as a one-of-a-kind Armani Hotel, which takes up four floors. WSCP is working closely with the builder to help create a unique door system for the hotel that incorporates 4-inch thick doors and state of the art security systems.

While the Burj Dubai is a high profile project for WSCP, Darnell was quick to point out it is not the only interesting aspect of what the company does. The manufacturing company, which operates out of a non-descript plant on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, has a variety of patented products and processes that help make it the leading supplier of fire-rated building components in the US. Among those is the company's core product, called Tectonite™, a unique amalgam of diatomaceous earth, fiberglass, recycled newspaper and other ingredients. Tectonite is used as the base material for a variety of products sold into the fire-rated architectural door industry. In addition, WSCP has patented processes involving the use of intumescent material, combined in unique ways with everyday building materials, to provide fire-rated wood door frames that can be matched with architectural fire doors to give architects matching wood species options. “Our products are revolutionizing the public-occupancy commercial construction market,” Darnell said.

“The things we're doing in terms of product development are really pretty sophisticated,” Darnell said, “probably not what the average person thinks is happening down here on the Reservation.”

The Warm Springs Tribes' biggest revenue generators are Power Enterprise (a series of hydroelectric dams on the reservation) and tourism, which is fueled by Kah-Nee-Ta Resort and the gaming casino it houses. But Darnell's enterprise is rapidly catching up.

"And the nice thing about what we're doing," Darnell said, "is that it's generating not just jobs, but jobs that require a high level of skill and expertise." Those positions include high-end manufacturing jobs that require use of sophisticated measuring and testing equipment, as well as sales and product development jobs that require engineering and communications skills. WSCP currently employs 60 people, 80% of whom are Native Americans who live on the reservation.

According to Darnell, the company's growth is driven not just by the higher profile it has earned in export markets, but also by gaining a larger market share in the U.S. and by a new business model that involves adding value to its base products. "Other than the fact that my board of directors is comprised of Tribal members who answer to the Tribal Council, we're really no different from any other manufacturing company," Darnell said, "in order to survive we need to continually improve on what we do."

In addition to fire-rated materials used in building components, WSCP also has a ballistics division that develops a wide range of bullet-proofing materials used in a wide variety of products including doors, ceiling panels, military vehicles, boats, virtually anywhere bullet-proofing might be necessary. "As you might imagine, there's a big market for that all over the world," Darnell said. He went on to say that WSCP recently combined technologies to create unique fire-rated and bullet-proof doors. WSCP is believed to be the only manufacturer in the US to have successfully combined these two technologies. The product is awaiting a testing protocol to be developed by the certifying agencies.

WSCP also has a thriving business in specialized wood products, specifically a product called squiggle, which is used for installing corrugated PVC roofing and sold through home improvement stores such as Lowe's and Home Depot. This enterprise is doing much to offset the negative affects of the recent curtailment (due to the housing slump) at Warm Springs Forest Products, the Tribe's lumber mill.

"We couldn't be more proud of the technologies we're developing here at Warm Springs and how that technology is making a name for itself, for the Tribes and for Oregon, both overseas and here in the States," he said.

About Warm Springs Composite Products (WSCP):

Warm Springs Composite Products is a Native American owned business located in the high desert region of Central Oregon. The company is part of the Confederated Tribes economic enterprise system that includes Power Enterprises, Warm Springs Forest Products, Kah-Nee-Ta Resort and the Museum at Warm Springs. Over 3,900 members of the Confederated Tribes make their homes in Warm Springs, providing a strong and dependable employment base for companies like Warm Springs Composite Products. WSCP has for divisions manufacturing architectural fire-rated door components, fire-rated wood door frames, composite ballistics materials, and specialized wood products, in addition to offering many value-added services for commercial door manufacturers. For more information, visit www.wscp.com or call 800.853.1143.