

**MANUFACTURERS MOVING FORWARD: HOW MAINE MEP HELPS
COMPANIES MAKE AN IMPACT**

*Maine MEP's Quality Management Systems Training and Auditing Programs Take Local
Manufacturers to the Next Level*

AUGUSTA, ME – In a time where the economy is sagging, Maine manufacturers now more than ever are looking for unique ways to make an impression – whether that is to boost sales or expand their product lines into new markets.

Casco Bay Molding, a Liquid Silicone Rubber and plastic product development and manufacturing company in Sanford wanted to add something extra to their current quality management system toolbox. They were already ISO 9001:2000 certified, so their clients were consistently receiving products that met their needs. The organization was also working to continually improve on their processes, but wanted to take it to the next level.

“Bob Doiron and the Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Maine MEP) helped expand our ISO 9001:2000 program to capitalize on more medical work, through training in statistical quality control processes. These new processes have enhanced our capabilities and allowed us to communicate more effectively with our medical customers,” said Andrew Powell, president of Casco Bay Molding. “I am so pleased with Bob’s work and can’t say enough about the great services Maine MEP provides manufacturers like us in Maine.”

Casco Bay Molding utilized Maine MEP’s Quality Management Systems (QMS) training program to help with this very important step. Companies who sustain and expand on their ISO certification and compliance programs potentially open new international markets and attract new customers.

“We have assisted numerous Maine companies in achieving or sustaining ISO registration. Right now, because of the low U.S. dollar values against foreign currencies, this is the time for manufacturers to look at expanding their product lines into international markets, and Maine MEP can help them do that,” said Rosemary Presnar, operations manager for Maine MEP. “Also, the Maine Technology Institute and the Maine International Trade Center each partner with Maine MEP to offer QMS services and help companies meet international standards needs.”

To assist companies with setting up their ISO-based QMS, Maine MEP uses a collaborative training program that encourages ownership of the QMS at several levels within the company. That training can be customized to meet the company’s specific needs as part of the overall growth strategy of the company. Maine MEP provides QMS sustainment services and internal auditing in a number of sectors, including general manufacturing and services, medical devices, aerospace, automotive, food safety management, and environmental management systems.

“Bob Doiron conducted our third internal ISO 13485:2003 audit for our company, which was a huge help to us,” said Jayne Leiner, operations manager at Lighthouse Imaging

Corporation, a small company in Portland that provides optics for medical applications. She added “I am the only certified internal auditor at Lighthouse Imaging, and as the only trained auditor, we need to have an outside source come in to audit. Before each audit, Bob and I talk to get an idea of what to expect of one another, and he is always great to work with and very well prepared. Maine MEP provides a great service for us and we will call on them time and time again for assistance.”

Maine MEP’s services are not limited to ISO work. The organization provides a long list of other solutions, including performance-based training, Lean methodologies, plant layout assistance, and supply chain management.

“We are a key resource to manufactures in the state,” added Presnar. “We really want all of our Maine firms to succeed in the marketplace, and we can provide the expertise and the services to help these manufacturers to become globally competitive and realize their full potential.”

About Maine MEP

Maine MEP is an affiliate of the NIST under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2000 manufacturing and business “coaches” whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits, and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information on the Maine MEP program call 1-800-637-4634 or visit www.mainemep.org.