

## LEAN KAIZEN TRANSFORMS SHIPPING OPERATIONS AT WISCONSIN THREAD ROLLING COMPANY

**ABOUT ROLLED THREADS UNLIMITED LLC.** Founded in 1985, Rolled Threads produces fully threaded bar, custom machined parts, fully threaded and double ended studs, bolts, lead screws and specialty fasteners at its plant in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Since 2001, the company has been owned by F. W. Ladky Associates, a family owned business founded in 1919 that specializes in the sale of steel products. Rolled Threads has 30 employees, including five in the shipping area.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Inefficiencies and a lack of organization in the company's shipping area had caused delays in the delivery of customers' orders. The shipping area lagged the continuous improvement efforts in other areas of the plant. The packaging process can be very costly and time consuming, as well as labor-intensive and requiring a large amount of materials. Production runs can involve thousands of pieces that must then be packaged and shipped to the customer in 50 to 100 pieces per box, which can take several days to pack.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** WMEP Manufacturing Solutions led a kaizen event in Rolled Threads' shipping area, which led to changes that improved efficiency in the shipping process. Rolled Threads updated its packaging process, simplified workflow and switched materials in order to strengthen the packages in which it ships customers' orders. Improvements to streamline the shipping station include a newly dedicated desktop workstation, documented packaging instructions, labeling capabilities, a highly visible shipping board to prioritize orders and the reclamation of overstock shelving. Rolled Threads has also reorganized and streamlined its inspection process.

**"We needed a fresh pair of eyes to give us a few ideas. The WMEP consultant gave us a few suggestions and my guys and I also came up with ideas of our own. We've changed a lot of things. Some changes are very small. Some is just the appearance of the shipping area. It looks so much better. We are very organized now."**

-John Radi, Shipping & Receiving Manager

## RESULTS



Workflow changes have boosted Rolled Threads' productivity and efficiency in its shipping department



A **\$20,000** investment for has improved top-line capacity by 20 percent



The need to hire another employee was avoided saving the company **\$60,000** in pay and benefits



Eliminated troublesome bottlenecks in the plant



Successful changes in the shipping department spread to other areas of Rolled Threads' value steam

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