

MAINE COMPANY SUCCESSFULLY PASSES TRANSITION AUDIT TO ISO 9001:2015

ABOUT U S FELT MANUFACTURING INC. US Felt is an innovative manufacturer of non-woven fabrics utilizing traditional pressed felt and needled felt technologies. These techniques allow them to efficiently produce felt in roll form and in a wide range of densities and felt grades. These felt materials conform to established felt specifications set forth by SAE classifications. Being ISO certified and an approved government supplier, US Felt's products are compliant with accepted international standards and military specifications. These standards provide the basis for a variety of applications and end-uses. US Felt was founded in 1987 and changed to its current ownership in 2007. They currently employ 18 people at their Sanford, Maine facility.

THE CHALLENGE. US Felt has always recognized the importance of a formal quality management system, but a downturn in the demand for their products forced them to let their ISO 9001 certification phase out. Key customers that required ISO 9001 certification from their suppliers were willing to continue placing orders as long as a re-certification plan was in place. US Felt recognized the need for outside expertise to assist them in the transition to ISO 9001:2015 and reached out to Maine MEP for assistance.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Maine MEP, part of the MEP National Network™, worked closely with key employees to update QMS documentation for ISO 9001:2015 compliance and to train internal auditors. A Maine MEP project manager acted as the lead auditor to meet the company's formal internal audit requirement. Maine MEP and its partner Maine International Trade Center were able to secure OEA grant funding to partially offset the costs of the project.

The company successfully passed their ISO 9001:2015 transition audit in late June 2019 and are formally certified. Certification ensures they remain a preferred supplier for several key accounts that total \$250K in annual sales. Certification is also important to the company's ability to attract new customers. By using Maine MEP services they were able to offset training costs by \$13K.

"US Felt Company and Maine MEP formed a true partnership as each organization works to improve the viability of our America based manufacturing operations. Specifically, US Felt Company was faced with a business crisis where by our U.S. military solicitations business was on hold until we achieved a newly implemented wool felt standard for mildew-moisture control certification. US Felt Company exhausted its financial and personnel resources to successfully achieve the government certification and restore our military felt business. US Felt Company is the only wool felt supplier to have achieved this certification. At that time US Felt Company renewed its commitment to ISO 9001:2015 certification. The continuing NIST MEP relationship and this project activity allowed us to satisfy our other major customers' requirements for ISO 9001:2015 certification. "

-Vin Boragine, President

RESULTS



Achieved ISO 9001:2015 transition certification



\$250,000 retained of key account sales



\$3,000 invested in training



\$9,000 invested in internal documentation updates



\$13,000 saved as a result of doing business with Maine MEP

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