

OPEX & SUPPLY CHAIN

ABOUT WESTERN SHELTER SYSTEMS. Western Shelter Systems, based in Eugene, Oregon, specializes in providing durable, rapidly deployable shelter solutions for emergency response, disaster relief, and industrial applications. Known for high-quality, modular designs, Western Shelter Systems supplies shelters, heating, and ventilation systems tailored to meet the needs of first responders, military, and humanitarian organizations worldwide. The company's products are engineered for rugged environments, offering reliable performance in challenging conditions. With a commitment to innovation and community support, Western Shelter Systems has established itself as a trusted leader in the emergency shelter industry.

THE CHALLENGE. The company faced a rapid increase in demand for a new product line. Due to several product design revisions and the newness of the novel production process, the company sought assistance from OMEP, part of the MEP National Network™, to reduce waste on the line.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. OMEP started by convening stakeholders to understand the current state, various equities and the desired end state. Value stream mapping was conducted to quantify the original state of production. OMEP also conducted time and motion studies. In collaboration with production staff, the OMEP identified several opportunities for improved production efficiency.

Through a series of continuous improvement cycles the production staff, guided by OMEP, streamlined product workflow, standardized processes, and identified alternate materials and methods, and implemented changes throughout the line. The portfolio of improvements has saved labor, reduced defect rates, reduced scrap material, reduced raw material costs, and contributed to increased worker safety.

OMEP used the project as an opportunity to train employees on continuous improvement and the use of the improvement kata. The production staff has shown ownership of the methodology and uses it continuous improvement to make further advancements.

"At Western Shelter Systems, efficiency & safety are critical to delivering life-saving solutions. Partnering with OMEP has transformed our production processes through VSM, time & motion studies & stakeholder collaboration. OMEP identified key opportunities for improvement, helping us streamline workflows, standardize procedures, and implement better materials and methods. Thanks to these efforts, we've reduced labor, minimized waste, and increased raw material savings. Workplace safety has also improved. Additionally, smarter station planning and procedural adjustments have reduced cycle times, boosting overall productivity. OMEP didn't just provide solutions—they empowered our production team with CI training, creating a culture of ongoing advancements. The results speak for themselves: reduced costs, enhanced safety, and optimized efficiency. We are deeply grateful for their partnership and expertise, which have truly elevated our operations."

-Bryson Lee, Program Manager

RESULTS



6 jobs created



Doubled sales to **\$10,400,000**



Reduced labor by **166** hours/unit and raw material savings of \$30,000; total annual savings \$280,000



Reduced cycle time by **2** days/unit



Increased workplace safety

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