

# A.W. Chesterton Company

After almost 130 years in business, A.W. Chesterton Company's roots in quality and value have continued to thrive through its commitment to providing customers with reliable, efficient, and economic solutions. Founded in Boston, Massachusetts in 1884 as a purveyor of steamboat and engineering supplies, Chesterton quickly expanded to begin manufacturing and rapidly grew as a focused provider of sealing solutions for a wide variety of process industries. Now, as a fourth generation family owned company, Chesterton has built on its strong product solution and service background to provide the local support needed to service its customers worldwide.

Valve World Americas had the opportunity to visit Chesterton's Groveland, MA facilities to learn about the company's efforts in acting as a business partner with clients, the importance of its product development, and the future of the A.W. Chesterton Company as the company moves forward through its second century in business.

By Sarah Bradley

"Chesterton is a family-owned company, so we have a good, balanced and disciplined approach to what we do and how we do it. What differentiates Chesterton is our ability to solve more than one problem in more than one way. We have very strong technology and highly engineered products. Whether it's packing for a valve, polymeric sealing for ultra-high pressures, valve coatings to reduce wear, lubricants and mechanical seals, or if it's engineering assistance, we have a solution," said Kevin Mahan, Vice President of Global Sales. "At the end of the day the customer wants to lower emissions, ensure safety, and be more efficient. We can provide solutions that allow that –making their products cost less while maintaining or improving quality."

## Being a business partner & knowledge provider

"Our strategic focus is to become a partner with our customers to enable them to be more efficient, improve their performance and meet safety and environmental goals. Being a knowledge provider is a large enabler for us. The best way to be able to deliver solutions to our clients is by developing our knowledge and to pass it on to them. We need to understand their market dynamics, trends, applications, standards, and to know what works and what doesn't. In order for a customer to



Kevin Mahan and Scott Boyson show us around one of Chesterton's facilities

trust us with their business, we need to have that depth of experience and the ability to deliver a meaningful, competitive advantage to them for their marketplace," said Scott Boyson, Global Business Development Manager.

Chesterton prides itself on being able to build relationships with their customers that will endure over time, be nurtured through mutual efforts to improve product performance and quality, and remain consistent in the reliability of service.

"Besides the products, it is the people that bring value to Chesterton. It's comforting for our clients, channel partners, and our



specialists to be able to call up year after year and still find that they can deal with the same person that has helped them resolve difficult applications in the past," said Thomas Richard, Manager Global Technical Services – Engineered Polymer Solutions. "It's that personal relationship that you have developed, based on value that builds their confidence in our company."

Maintaining that close connection with the customer has always been the fundamental basis of Chesterton's business model. Now, Chesterton has developed ways to ensure that deeply-rooted relationship is nurtured on all levels of business from engineering to customer service to the executive level.

"The Executive Sponsorship program was started to bring our whole company even closer to our customers. In order to do that, you have to start with your executive team. We partner with key executives from our global accounts to nurture a strong strategic alliance at higher levels and drive our culture closer to the customer. Building a relationship with customers from a grassroots standpoint is a really strong way to understand what the market requirements are," said Kevin Mahan. "Part of what we are doing is leveraging that very strong experience and bringing it to a corporate level, so we all understand the ways we can truly help one another. We are able to align ourselves better and apply it across a wider and deeper area of business for greater benefit."

The company maintains that relationship in working with its channel partners and training sales staff to ensure that customers can rely on the consistency of Chesterton products and service throughout the

globe. Ensuring that the company is able to provide technical knowledge and assistance is a driving force behind Chesterton's company culture.

"Training our field personnel on the technology, application, and installation of valve sealing and repair so that they are able to help customers is a critical component for success. We have a training and certification program for both our partners and customers to make sure that they are qualified and comfortable installing the devices that we sell them. We also ensure that all of our training materials are translated so that we can ensure proper training around the world," said Guy Clement, Director of Global Training.



Chesterton has solutions for all customer types and industries

"Training also helps us to keep consistency with our clients globally, making sure we are all working in a similar fashion. We look for partners that are aligned with our goals of being a true knowledge provider interested in delivering and receiving greater efficiencies and who are ready to grow with us," revealed Christine Mirabito, Director of Customer Service.



Providing valuable knowledge is a key focus



# - Valve Sealing Solutions



Recent on-site testing investment has greatly expanded capabilities

## Engineered Sealing Solutions

The level of knowledge, engineering, and testing combined in the development of Chesterton's packing and sealing products is an important component of the company's product solutions. Chesterton segments the valve sealing industry into three areas of focus: End Users, OEMs, and Service Providers such as contractors and valve repair shops. With each segment, Chesterton is able to provide tailored, engineered solutions for the valve sealing needs of a variety of industries such as offshore, refining, exploration, mining, chemical, nuclear, and fossil power. While each segment has its own set of specific requirements, all clients are looking to Chesterton for



Low emission packing passes fire testing

high performance and quality, strong application knowledge, technologically advanced highly engineered products, efficient manufacturing, technical support, and reliability.

"We have clients with applications that range from straight forward to very demanding in a variety of industries. It's situations like that where we try to augment our product line to extend the service life of sealing their valves and to ensure they don't have to worry about leakage. We will bring different engineering teams together to find a combination of our engineered products and specialty materials, in addition to the mechanical packing to find a sealing solution. With the difficult

sealing challenges the industry is facing, Chesterton's combination of materials, technology and experienced people make the difference," explained Neil Dickson, Chesterton's Application Engineering Manager – Mechanical Packing.



Polymer spring energized seals

"Our ability to custom blend and manufacture specific materials gives us the capability to handle some of our most difficult challenges. We take higher end manufactured polymers and load them to create a seal. For instance, we are producing five different blends of PEEK polymer material and are able to control the quality – which is critical because these tough applications demand flawless material," said Thomas Richard. "When no one else can tackle the challenge, people



Testing and installation training are critical components for reliability

know Chesterton can handle the tough applications."

## Performance Testing

With the importance of valve sealing and packing in the reduction of emissions, Chesterton has made a significant investment in maintaining its commitment to properly testing its products. With construction of new facilities to increase the testing capabilities of their current test labs, the company is able to offer customers testing to API 622 and ISO 15848-1 certification standards. Testing can be performed with methane, helium and steam.

Chesterton's engineering team works together with OEMs, end users and aftermarket repair representatives to ensure that their sealing solutions pass the required API622 and ISO 15848-1 certifications. This helps their clients make certain that the valves they use are working at the highest level of efficiency and functionality.

"The investment in on-site testing allows us to work with OEM valve manufacturers' to test various types of valves, sizes and pressure classes. Not only do we test to current and future standards like the API 624 protocol, but also to troubleshoot or replicate what may have occurred in the field. This is becoming so important because customers need to see the test data to the new standards and it helps build confidence with our clients," explained Kevin McArthur, Engineering Services Manager. "We are tuned into the industry and while others are reducing their R&D in this area, we are making the investment into the future of valve sealing."

## Quality counts

Besides maintaining quality through the service they provide, Chesterton holds a deep sense of pride in the quality of the products they supply. Ensuring customers of the highest level of products is important to the company's brand, and while cost-effectiveness is always a goal, quality is never to be compromised.

"We are an ISO-certified company, dealing with the most regulated industries on an everyday, global basis. Quality is built into the product from the very beginning of the concept, design, and development phases so that the end result is a high performance quality product. Our materials are qualified through the R&D process, the inspection process and we monitor the manufacturing in the final output. Most of our Quality team have been here for over 15 years

and these people have all become experts over that period of time. Having that knowledge and expertise available daily is a great benefit. It allows us to have a great line of communication and the ability to react to situations quickly," said James Finnegan, Quality Supervisor – Mechanical Packing. "The quality process is constantly monitored and tracked. Our customers appreciate the cradle-to-grave traceability that we have on all mechanical packing materials. We know what is coming in and when and where it came from. We know how it is made and designed and we know the end output because we have tracked it, and monitored all of these steps along the way to ensure that the customer gets a quality product. At the end of the day all of our employees care and understand the importance of our customers and that Quality is everyone's responsibility."

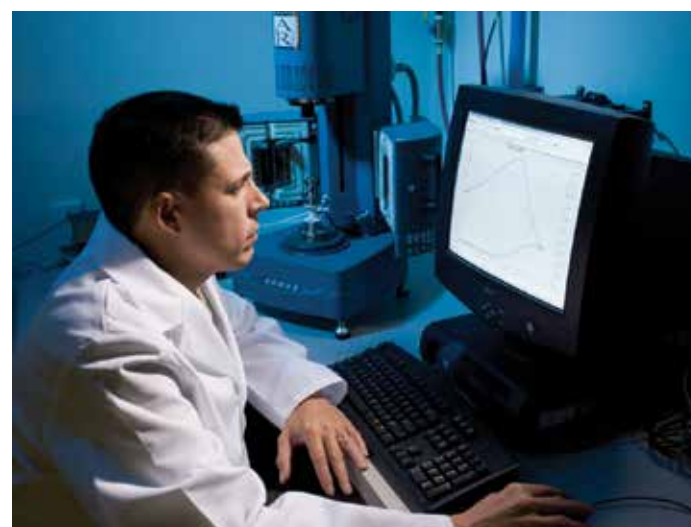


Low emissions OEM packing testing

## Expanding into the future

A.W. Chesterton Company will continue to pursue growth in the future by further investing in the products that have set them apart in quality and engineering.

"For the size of our company, we have tremendous brand recognition around the world, tremendous reach – there is not a corner of the world where we are not present and doing business," said Kevin Mahan. "Our business continues to grow because the value in the products, engineering, and materials is so strong. We can approach a valve and provide so many different ways of either making it safer, emit less, last longer, more efficient, and ultimately improve the value to our partners and customers."



Various blends of fibers and polymers meet application demands