

## Product news:

# Cragin carries Simpson Strong-Tie anchoring adhesive

If you're looking for the perfect all-weather anchoring adhesive, look no further than Cragin Industrial Supply.

Cragin now offers Acrylic-Tie™ from Simpson Strong-Tie Co., Inc. The product, which has been on the market for about a year, is used in industrial applications to structurally anchor threaded rod or rebar into solid base materials such as concrete or masonry. The product provides a permanent anchoring solution.

Acrylic-Tie is more than twice as strong as a typical mechanical fastener, such as a wedge anchor, says Mark Kennedy, anchoring systems specialist

for Simpson Strong-Tie. Greater strengths are achieved with minimal embedment.

The all-temperature-dispensing properties make the product easy to use year-round.

Acrylic-Tie is dispensed using a special two-part caulk gun that keeps

users' hands from coming into contact with the product, minimizing mess and cleanup.

"This is the perfect product when you need an anchoring solution that can withstand a dynamic or vibratory load, while maintaining very high strengths," Kennedy says.



**SIMPSON**

**Strong-Tie**  
**ANCHOR SYSTEMS**

*Acrylic-Tie is the perfect solution to affix threaded rod or rebar into solid base materials.*

INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY  
**Cragin**

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**TO:**

# THE INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY Cragin CHRONICLE



July 2000  
Vol 1, NUMBER 2

WWW.CRAGIN.COM

power tools • industrial & janitorial supplies • hardware • paint • plumbing • electrical supplies • factory supplies • fasteners • safety equipment • abrasives

## Cragin carries on tradition with fourth generation

Being the fourth generation in a family-owned business may seem like tough shoes to fill, but Cragin Industrial Supply's Rob and C.J. Szafraniec take the role in stride.

Maybe that's because the siblings learned how to cut and thread pipe and stock a warehouse before they were old enough to drive. Growing up and working in their family's then-hardware store, the two learned the basics of what it takes to run a business.

Some of the principles they learned still apply today, though Rob and C.J. certainly have more business know-how than they did as children. The two are working diligently to see that Cragin expands as a premier supplier of commercial, industrial and institutional products in the Chicago area.

"We're carrying on a tradition, as well as growing," Rob says. "We're not trying to redevelop Cragin — we just want to continue its success."

The brothers left other jobs to rejoin the family business. C.J. was a warehouse manager at Chicago's Plunkett Furniture until 1997, when he became Cragin's warehouse manager. Rob, who most recently was a sales engineer for Machinery Systems Inc. in Schaumburg, Ill., became Cragin's sales manager in October 1999.

"Our parents always made it clear that they wanted us to work outside the

family business, so that we could see what else was out there," Rob says.

"They never pressured us to work here."

Rob and C.J. are glad to be back and they have big goals for Cragin. In fact, within 10 years the brothers see the



company expanding to include several Chicago locations and possibly some out-of-state offices. In the shorter term, they would like to open a location in the western suburbs in late 2001 or early 2002.

"We're bursting at the seams in this location," C.J. says of Cragin's North Laramie Avenue office. "We need additional inventory space and a more efficient area for shipping."

As part of their strategy to make Cragin a key distributor in Chicago and beyond, Rob and C.J. are working hard to meet the stringent international

quality standards required for the coveted ISO 9002 registration.

"We need to clean up procedures and policies, and become more efficient in all of our business practices," Rob says. "This process takes more than a year, but it will be well worth it."

Cragin has seen double-digit sales growth in the last three to four years by expanding its customer base. Rob wants to give sales an even bigger shot in the arm by adding two more full-time outside salespeople this year, for a total of six.

Rob also wants to make sure the sales force knows Cragin's products inside and out, so the employees can make product recommendations and answer any questions customers may have about Cragin's line.

"This is what sets us apart from the big-box stores like Home Depot and distributors such as Grainger," C.J. says. "We have superior customer service and we know our products."

No matter how big Cragin becomes, though, the brothers want to make sure everyone still enjoys coming to work.

"Cragin has always been about having fun as well as getting the job done, and we want to carry that through as much as possible," Rob says.

## Association a win-win for Cragin, Motorola

Bob Beach wishes he worked with more companies of Cragin Industrial Supply's caliber.

The sales representative at ACS, Inc. says Cragin is an aggressive promoter for Motorola. ACS is a marketing representative for Motorola Spirit two-way radios.

Cragin teamed up with ACS in February to become a reseller of the radios. Since the beginning of their association, Beach has been impressed with Cragin representatives' professionalism and sales savvy.

"I wish more of my accounts were like Cragin," says Beach. "They want to make every product a success and will take whatever steps are necessary to make sure they promote a product. When you partner with someone with

that philosophy, it ensures success for all involved."

The Spirit radios are designed for instant, on-site communication between two or more people, such as at a construction job. They are professional and cutting; edge communication tools with features such as five-mile range capability, superior audio quality and a rechargeable battery.

Other applications for the Spirit radio include schools, hospitals, manufacturing plants and restaurants.

"Cragin's initial sales of the Spirit radios have been extremely encouraging," Beach says. "They're off to a better start than at least 75 percent of our new resellers. Cragin has been much more effective at generating sales than are other companies at startup."



*Bob Beach*

Beach says everyone at Cragin is a pleasure to work with and that upper management is very supportive.

"They are some of the nicest people I've ever met," he says. "I feel very comfortable working with them. We look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship."

## Parkview Metal Products counts on Cragin

Parkview Metal Products has been a Cragin customer for 38 years. Many things have changed over the years but there's always been one constant — Cragin's top-notch assistance.

"They have the best prices and the best service," says Al Dubiak, maintenance manager at Parkview Metal Products, a Chicago metal-stamping company. "You can tell them what you want over the phone, and even if it's a

box of nuts, they will go out of their way to bring it to you."

While the company could go to other suppliers, Parkview Metal Products says Cragin is the best.

"We rely on them to make recommendations for products and to track down hard-to-find items for special projects," Dubiak says. "Plus,



*Al Dubiak*

when the sales rep comes over, he takes inventory for us so we know what items we're short on and what we need to order."

That's the level of service Parkview can count on with Cragin.

## Convention tools pave way for growth

Cragin Industrial Supply understands the value of industry conventions.

Conventions help the company to stay a step ahead of the competition, provide higher quality to customers and make important vendor contacts.

A good example was the spring convention of the American Supply and Machinery Manufacturers' Association (ASMMMA) and the Industrial Distribution Association (IDA) held May 6-8 in Dallas. Cragin principals came

away with new insights that will benefit their customers.

"Overall, this was an excellent event," says Chris Szafraniec, Cragin's manager. "If you get even one thing out of a conference that helps you grow

## Cragin works toward ISO 9002 registration

Cragin Industrial Supply recently began an 18-month review of its quality processes to ensure customers receive the best products and services.

Cragin’s goal is to achieve ISO 9002 registration, a designation that means stringent international quality standards have been met in all areas from contract review to training.

“It’s a very intense process that makes you look at your business through a microscope,” says Chris Szafranec, Cragin’s manager. “We’re

examining everything from how an order is placed to how we handle inventory.”

Customers can remain confident that Cragin will continue to provide enhanced product quality and reliability at a reasonable price under the ISO standards.

“We’re committed to improving ourselves as a company so that we can become a major player in the Chicago market,” Chris says. “In the long term, it will help us and the customer.”

Cragin decided to pursue ISO regis-

tration to gain a more competitive edge. Many vendors want to buy products from fewer customers and are using ISO registration as a prequalifier in determining the companies they do business with, Chris says.

Registered companies often find that their market opportunities increase.

“We need to be able to go after some of the bigger business,” Chris says.

“Achieving this quality assurance system will give us more power to do that.”

## Attendees soak up tool show atmosphere

Cragin Industrial Supply’s semi-annual “Tool Show” March 31-April 1 was a big success, as visitors came from across the Chicago area to enjoy the event and gain some knowledge.

The two-day show exposed more than 100 customers and potential customers to products they might not know Cragin carries, such as Elk River’s line of body harnesses, Motorola’s Spirit two-way radio and Turbanair’s paint sprayer.

In addition to enjoying product

demonstrations, attendees renewed or strengthened acquaintances with Cragin owners and employees over lunch.

As an added attraction, the show — offered in conjunction with Milwaukee Electric Tool — featured special pricing on Milwaukee power tools and accessories.

We’d like to thank everyone who participated in the event and we hope to see you at our next tool show in October!



*New products and a race truck were among the attractions at Cragin’s Tool Show.*

## Convention

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your business, it’s worth the time, effort and money.”

The conference focused on how changing technology is affecting small distributors, and showcased solutions for competing in a global economy.

Seminars included the future of distribution; the changing channels of distribution, such as e-commerce; strategies for managing integrated

supply; and distributor best practices.

“These seminars help us determine how to position ourselves in the future,” Chris says. “We came away with a lot of ideas that will give us greater opportunities to become a premium provider of commercial, industrial and institutional products.”

Cragin is a member of Atlanta-based IDA, the world’s largest trade associa-

tion of distributors to industry. The association’s activities focus on areas that are key to managing a distributorship.

Based in Cleveland, the ASMMA is a manufacturer trade organization that helps members sell products through industrial distributors.