



Call for Nominations

This year's winners will be featured in a special Crystal Achievement display Oct. 6-8 at GlassBuild America in Las Vegas. The deadline is May 15. Submit nominations at www.glassmagazine.net/caa.htm

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Financial

Safti receives honor

Q&A with President William O'Keeffe

In April, the City of San Francisco and the State of California recognized San Francisco-based fire-rated glazing and framing supplier Safti First for the company's 25 years in business advancing fire and life safety. In addition, the City of Merced, Calif., named the company and its parent O'Keeffe's Inc., "Midsize Business Employer of the Year."

Katy Devlin talks to Safti First President William O'Keeffe about the recognition and the company.



What differentiates Safti First from other midsize employers?

We encourage all our employees to take initiative on different projects they want to see through. For example, the Holiday Bike Giveaway was an idea that came from one of our employees who worked out of the Merced manufacturing plant. They wanted to reward elementary students for doing well in school and give them a holiday that they will remember. This year, the plant is planning to do something bigger and better, and the company is always behind ideas that give back to the community.

Why do you deserve this award?

We weren't really looking for an award—we just wanted to do something for the community that allows us to grow and flourish. Our people are our best resource, and we wouldn't have won this award if not for the input and effort of our employees that work out of our manufacturing facility. The recognition really was a pleasant surprise and we are very honored to be a recipient of it.

Does Safti offer any distinct benefits to employees? If so, what?

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What changes have you put in place to make manufacturing more energy efficient?

- ☐ Implemented a best practices program to operate more efficiently
- ☐ Invested in more efficient equipment and

- machinery
- ☐ Using high gas mileage trucks
 - ☐ Buying locally
 - ☐ Other
 - ☐ More than one of the above

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Is your company being affected by the credit crunch?

No	47%
Yes	36%
Not yet, but I anticipate it	10%
Not sure	7%



we have a quarterly MBO (management by objectives) program that rewards employees for all their hard work. We also do recognition parties and barbeques when employees exceed their goals.

What are the work-life benefits you have in place?

We have all the benefits offered by larger corporations. They are offered to provide a stable employee base which allows for team building and growth.

Does Safti have any growth plans for the future? If so, can you provide any details?

We are planning to build another 100,000-square-foot manufacturing facility to exclusively house our glass production, and this will include glass tempering and edging. Innovation has always been a strong suit of the company since 1982, and we will continue to introduce new and better performing products that improve life safety and property protection. We will also strengthen our commitment to educating users about safe and correct applications of fire rated glazing.

What is the mission of Safti First?

The mission of the company is evident in its name—SAFTI stands for Safety and Fire Technology International. We were the pioneers in offering products that met both fire and impact safety, and we will continue to excel and be the innovative leader in bringing fire rated glass and framing products that benefit the end user. Since we manufacture a life and safety product, educating the building community about safe and proper applications of fire rated glazing is very important to us. We further this mission with the release of "A Fire and Impact Safety Case Study" DVD (www.safti.com/dvd).

Do you have any advice for small cos. aspiring to be midsize?

Stay profitable! Be an innovator—if you feel that you have an offering that benefits the end user and the industry overall, don't be afraid to challenge conventional thinking.

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