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## New markets spark growth at International Fire-Shield in Auburn

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AUBURN — International Fire-Shield, Inc. began targeting some niche markets in 2012 and is planning for growth as a result.

The company, based in Auburn, doubled its staff to 10 people last year and expects to double its workforce again in 2013, says Pat Bumpus, CEO and founder. He also expects the company to increase its sales by 100 percent or more this year.

The firm got its start in 1984 as a developer of fire retardant products. Bumpus says he returned to the firm about 18 months ago after some time off and saw a major need among residences for the disabled and in student housing for a more effective approach to fire retardants.

International Fire-Shield took some time to develop a broad package to help those institutions determine the best products for their needs, apply them correctly, and then track and maintain those applications, Bumpus says. The program has been on the market since 2012.

Since then Arc organizations in Onondaga, Chemung, and Madison counties, disabled-services organizations in the Finger Lakes, and Cornell University have taken advantage of the company's approach, Bumpus says. About 10 to 15 health-care organizations have adopted the program in the last six months as well.

Fire-Shield employs its own in-house staff who can visit sites and apply the company's fire-retardant products themselves. They can also evaluate what may have been applied to surfaces in the past.

That way, a facility can be sure its getting the proper product applied in the proper way, Bumpus says. The firm also runs training programs for clients' maintenance staff if they want to handle the work themselves and become certified in the field, he adds.

Fire-Shield developed new technology that allows it to track applications of fire retardants more effectively, Bumpus says. The method involves applying an ultraviolet stamp on a surface that has been treated.

The permanent stamp can then be read at a later date and provides information including date of application, the materials used, and even who applied the retardant.

"That'll go right back to batch numbers at our plant," Bumpus says. "It completes the loop."

Fire-Shield plans to apply for patent protection on the technology, he adds.

Fire-Shield has always done similar outreach to its customers and has had staff certified in



**Top photo: From left: George Murray, project manager; Miguel Martinez, assistant-vice president; Mark Cook, vice president, sales; and Patrick Bumpus, founder and CEO discuss operations during a meeting.**

**Right: Dale Custer, International Fire-Shield applicator and crew chief applies product to an office.**

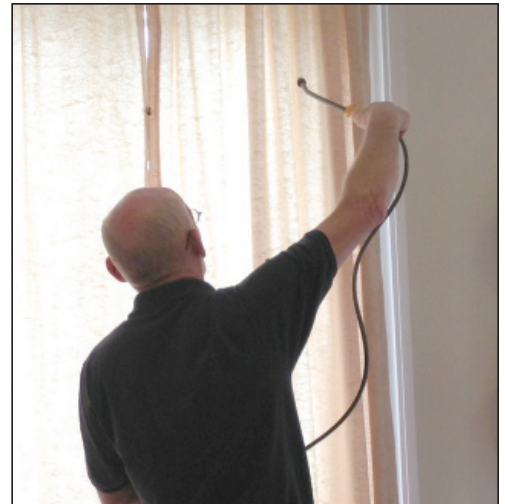


PHOTO COURTESY OF INTERNATIONAL FIRE-SHIELD, INC.

applying fire retardants on its staff for years. But a formal program targeted at student housing and residences for the disabled is new, Bumpus says.

The company recently announced a partnership with Liberty ARC of Amsterdam that Bumpus says will help spread Fire-Shield's approach nationwide. Liberty, he says, is nationally regarded among Arc groups.

The two organizations are planning to partner to both manufacture and apply Fire-Shield's products at residences for the disabled around

the state and nation.

The effort will create jobs for the people Liberty serves, according to the organizations. One of Liberty's programs helps provide jobs for disabled individuals.

Repackaging Fire-Shield's products for wider distribution will be a part of that program, Bumpus says. Liberty may also look to train some of the people it works with in applying Fire-Shield's materials. □

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