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## Metalworking Technology

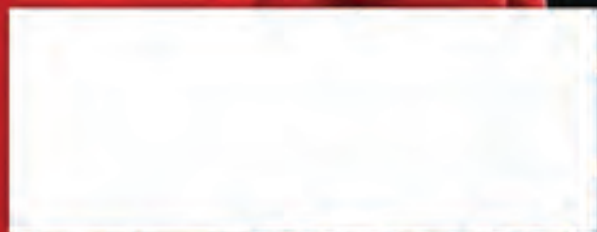
# *Making it in* **CANADA**

Can Canada's manufacturing industry compete on the world stage?

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# Going GREEN



A water tank with a heat exchanger in Calstone's facility.



Scarborough company aims to be the first manufacturer off the grid

**T** IRED OF YOUR old office furniture? According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, consumers discard several million tonnes each year of used chairs, desks, and cubicles. Jamie Ecclestone, partner and product manager for furniture manufacturer Calstone Inc., says this wasteful practice is bad for the environment, and bad for your wallet.

In fact, the Calstone team believes so strongly in their message of environmental responsibility that they offer customers a Remanufacturing Program, guaranteeing their products won't end up in a landfill. "When our customers decide it's time to replace their Calstone office furniture, we'll arrange for pick-up of the old products when we deliver the new," Ecclestone says. "This eliminates the headache and downtime associated with such a move, and saves them a substantial amount in handling fees."

The old furniture is then returned to Calstone's manufacturing facility in Scarborough, ON, where it is either recycled, or refurbished and put back into service. This remanufacturing program is just part of Calstone's efforts towards environmental sustainability. As Ecclestone explains, "going green" means far more than





**MANUFACTURING ON THE MOVE I**  
Calstone



resurfacing a few scratched-up conference room tables.

For starters, Calstone orders its steel cut to size, to reduce the amount of material that goes to the dumpster. It uses eco-friendly soap-based solvents to degrease sheet metal parts before painting them with reduced chemical content paints specially ordered from Sherwin Williams. And it collects rainwater on the roof of its manufacturing facility, and use it to flush toilets and cool spot welding equipment.

Still, it's not done. Calstone strives to be the first manufacturing plant to go off the grid. Working with utility company Bullfrog Power, a leader in green energy, the Ecclestone team is exploring solar and even wind power in an effort to use 100 per cent sustainable energy. "Green to us is more than cleaning up your manufacturing practices, and reducing waste," points out Ecclestone. "We want to generate our own power from renewable sources, avoid city water, and ultimately have our plant completely self-contained in terms of utility usage."

It's not an easy task. Calstone finds itself the pioneer with many of its green initiatives. "Everybody thinks this is a great idea, but the manufacturing industry as a whole is very behind in this area. So we have all these great ideas to go green, but we always seem to hit an end—we can't always find environmentally friendly materials or supplies, and there's little support from other organizations for things like solar power. In the end, we'll probably have to



Going green at Calstone. Plants on pillars

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implement a lot of it on our own.”

And, as Ecclestone explains, going green can be expensive. The paint costs more, the solvent costs more. Steel is more expensive when you bring it in cut-to-size. And shipping used product back to their factory for refurbishing isn't cheap. These additional costs don't bother Ecclestone, though: much of what the company has done so far he considers low-hanging fruit and the rest just a necessary part of the business model. “We feel that it all pans



itself out in the grand scheme of things.”

Apparently, Calstone's customers feel the same way. Since 1985, business has grown steadily. Says Ecclestone, “with all the green initiatives that we've implemented, our customers like our story. They stay loyal and continue to buy from us.” As proof, Ecclestone points to a recent partnership with business communication giant Pitney Bowes, who asked Calstone to manufacture all of its mailroom furniture for North America.

“Because of our dedication to the environment, we're landing more accounts and getting larger partners.”

It looks like green manufacturing is a good thing, not only for the environment, but for business too. So next time you're looking for some new office furniture, give Calstone a call. Your landfill will thank you. SMT

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*Lifetime Guarantee*



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