

 INDEPENDENCE DAY

As we enjoy July 4th with family and friends, we have a lot to celebrate. America, freedom, loved ones, hot dogs... There are so many reasons – and domestic manufacturing is one of them!

Domestic manufacturing operations lead to economic growth and help the U.S. stay competitive in the global marketplace. Reports from the Manufacturing Institute indicate that each dollar's worth of manufactured goods creates another \$1.34 of value elsewhere in the economy.

KEP is proud to manufacture all of our products in the U.S. and we are the **ONLY domestic manufacturer of natural rubber latex tubing!** Read more about the advantages of domestic manufacturing in our [Leader Views Blog](#) – then go get ready for grilling and fireworks!

 LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

In our next article series, Kent Elastomer Products President Bob Oborn discusses our Lean journey—How KEP adopted Lean practices, its positive impact on our business, and why it matters! You will learn about how it got started, our ongoing commitment to continual improvement and why adopting new practices for efficiency is an important component of all manufacturing facilities' quality and success. Stay tuned!

 THIS MONTH'S KEP CHALLENGE



Decreasing Costs, Increasing Customer Satisfaction



A few years back KEP was working with a company who wanted to lower the cost of one of their products. For the 66” tubes that our customer needed, we originally had to run the line to produce the parts at 45 ft./min. in order for the Operator to have time to package the tubing product properly. Speed affects costs dramatically, so we knew that if we decreased production times, our customer would be able to offer their product at the price point they wanted.

We focused on how to reduce the packaging portion of the job to make it easier and less time consuming for the Operator. With less time required for packaging, we were able to speed up the line to 90 ft./min. – double the former speed. Increasing line speed while reducing packaging time allowed for us to offer the pricing our customer wanted.

The cross-functional teams at KEP work with customers to solve problems and reach goals – Have a manufacturing challenge? From solving product issues to lowering costs, [we want to get to work to find your solution!](#)

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Meet Ken Robison



Ken Robison is a Senior Supervisor at our Kent facility, where he oversees the manufacture of latex tubing and custom dip-molded products. Ken joined the KEP team back in 1985 and has been steadily proving his worth and climbing the ladder in the 30+ years since! Born and raised in the area, Ken is a graduate of Rootstown High School and says family and hard work are the most important things in life, and in that order. Read more about Ken in our [Leader Views Blog](#).

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT



Reliable Products for Important Jobs



KEP is proud to manufacture a latex component of sonar buoys which is used to detect submarines. Pretty cool, right? In the Navy, sonar buoys, or "sonobuoys," are dropped into the ocean from Undersea Warfare (USW) aircraft, helicopters, and shore stations to monitor sonic vibrations, communicating any data back to its launch aircraft or station.

Sonar buoy data is useful for determining water depth, detecting underwater sounds, and identifying and tracking submarines. Identifying unknown and foreign submarine contact helps to inform and prepare our Navy, keeping us all safe. We are honored to provide high-quality, reliable sonar buoys our Navy, engineers, oceanographers and more need to complete their important jobs!



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