

 LEADER VIEWS

Business Benefits of Lean: Part 2

In the [first of this three-part series](#) on the business benefits of Lean, we shared the background story about how Kent Elastomer Products (KEP) struggled to commit to adopting a Lean culture in our three manufacturing locations in northeast Ohio.

Now in [part 2](#) President Bob Oborn discusses further how lean changes KEP in positive and profitable ways, empowers our team, liberates management, stimulates careers and improves company culture. Read the article series, then stay-up-to-date with our [Leader Views Blog](#) and recent [white papers](#).

 ABOUT US

Veterans... We Appreciate You!

We have a lot to be thankful for this season. This Veterans Day we say thank you to all of our veterans, including all the KEP team members who have served in The United States Armed Forces. We also say thank you to all of the members of our team and the families who continually support them the backbone that helps KEP grow strong.



We believe true leaders never stop leading just because they retire. That is true of our former President Murray Van Epp, who led KEP to growth and success from March 1996 to November 2011. Though retired from KEP, Murray continues to lead in his community.

In an effort to decrease collisions, a new law was passed in Ohio last year that requires drivers to give bicyclists a 3-foot buffer when passing. With the bike route still under design in Medina County, the safety of the bicyclists who will use it is very important to Murray and other community members. Enforcing measures to increase the safety of our team members was always one of the most stressed concerns when Murray was our leader at KEP, and continues to be. Now Murray is helping lead efforts to complete the bike route and increase the biker safety in his county by donating to fund 100 signs that will remind drivers of the new law. [Learn more about this project.](#)

 THIS MONTH'S KEP CHALLENGE



Working Within Limited Timeframes



In 2009, a valued client needed a new, latex-free diaphragm product manufactured and delivered in 6 weeks. Under normal manufacturing conditions, this is a tight lead time, but when working within limited production windows our KEP teams know how to keep the process moving smoothly.

The first step was recommending material for the product. After determining the best material for the diaphragms, we produced prototypes for our customer to get a vision of exactly what their product would look like. Once our customer chose the prototype, we sourced and mounted production tools and got to work. We delivered within the 6-week timeframe!

Our customer got exactly what they wanted, a quality, latex-free diaphragm manufactured efficiently with innovative thinking, and we still manufacture this product almost a decade later. This is only one of the many stories of how KEP manufactured products to our customers' exacting specifications by taking on a challenge. Think we could make something happen for you in a tight time frame or need a specific prototype? [We love a challenge!](#)

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Teri Clark is a Staff Accountant at our Kent facility. With a background in the accounting field, Teri offers experienced accounting services in accounts payable, accounts receivable, credit and collections, payroll and human resources. Learn more about this month's featured team member Teri on our Meet the Team page and in our [Leader Views Blog](#).

GROWING & EXPANDING



Kent Elastomer Products Inc., (KEP) is expanding its headquarters at 1500 St. Clair Ave., Kent, OH 44240 to accommodate a growing workforce. KEP a leading U.S. manufacturer and distributor of elastomer and latex tubing, non-latex Free-Band® tourniquets, and dip-molded products is experiencing exponential growth serving the medical, dental, food and beverage, sports and recreation, and other industries.

On Tuesday, September 11th, groundbreaking began on what will become an extended office area for KEP's Kent facility. KEP Director of Engineering and Maintenance, Reneé Onesti, helped to organize and facilitate the groundbreaking event which included comments from Mayor Jerry T. Fiala and KEP President Bob Oborn.

The expansion, which includes several offices and meeting rooms, will allow KEP to extend their office space and take advantage of more opportunities to grow as a business. KEP President Bob Oborn commented on offering more employment to the local community and extending opportunities for their team members as major motives for the expansion; We have a lot of great people here that need to have an opportunity to be able to grow.

[Read more in our Leader Views Blog.](#)

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