

Sierra Pacific gains Rocky Mountain advantage from Super Spacer

Sierra Pacific of Red Bluff, California, had a lot of good reasons to switch from aluminum box spacer to Super Spacer® eight years ago. A key point was the fact that upwards of 40% of the company's business is in Rocky Mountain markets. The company is one of West Coast America's largest wood and aluminum, wood-clad window manufacturers.

"Breather tubes are the order of the day for windows going into all high altitude areas," says General Sales Manager Rod Preston. "For us at Sierra Pacific, that means all our sales to Colorado plus most of them to Utah and many parts of Nevada and Montana."

"The presence of breather tubes," notes Preston, "means losing the thermal advantages of argon gas fill—a void we make up for," he says, "with the big thermal boost we get from Super Spacer. Super Spacer's warm edge technology gives our windows a U-Value comparable to our competitor's windows with argon gas."

Covering the 11 Western states with a primary focus on residential new construction and light commercial, Sierra Pacific found its customer base more than willing to go along with all the other added advantages that Super Spacer brought to the table.

"Aesthetics has turned out to be a marketing plus," remarks Preston, "because a lot of our competitors use multiple types of metal and flexible spacer bars in different shaped products. What Super Spacer has allowed us to do is give our customers what they deserve: a consistent and very good looking spacer appearance no matter what product they buy."

"Another big point, of course, especially with wood windows, is that we want as little condensation as possible. With Super Spacer, we really promote its industry-leading condensation resistance factor."

Preston also points to a new element on consumers' minds these days: noise, or its more formal name STC (sound transmission coefficient). "It's becoming more and more important every day," he

says, "and a lot of it is because of busy streets, airports and those kinds of things."

There are a variety of STC rating parameters, he explains, with spacer bar affecting some but not all transmissions. "There's enough of a sound reduction benefit, though, that it's certainly been comforting for us to know that we ended up with the best in that regard, too."

Switching to Super Spacer was undertaken not only for marketing reasons, comments Sierra Pacific's Production Manager, Bob Taylor. Productivity gains, fewer seal failures and a big jump in shaped-window

capability all figured into the mix.

"From a production perspective, the change in spacers has made all the difference in the world," comments Taylor of what today is a smooth running, 800 IG-unit/shift operation. "Super Spacer is a very user-friendly product, and it's very consistent both in terms of its application and the charcoal gray color we use."

"Another thing," he says, "is that since we've started using Super Spacer, our seal failures have gone way down to less than 1%."

As well, shaped-unit production has grown by leaps and bounds with Super Spacer and is now 15% of Sierra Pacific's overall plant output. "We have a lot more flexibility with the much tighter radiuses we can attempt. Now," Taylor says proudly, "we don't turn down any requests."



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Cambridge, OH 43725
Tel. 1-740-439-2338
Fax. 1-740-439-0121

(Toll free in North America)
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www.superspacer.com