



Real-Life Stories

3M and Greenbrier Companies Case Study: Working Together to Advance Welding Safety and Worker Protection

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As a leading supplier of transportation equipment and services to the railroad and marine industries, Greenbrier has about 10,000 manufacturing employees. A lot of those positions, like welding and grinding, come with inherent risks. That's why Dave Harvey, the Director of Environment, Health and Safety, was looking for a way to even the playing field when protecting his employees — from those in higher risk jobs to those in lower risk jobs.

Dave met with the 3M PPE Safety Solutions Team, and they helped him determine that the best way to maximize productivity and help protect welders' lungs from welding fumes and other welding hazards was an integrated respiratory protection system. Enter the 3M™ Adflo™ Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) System: a respirator with integrated hard hat, welding and faceshield, and optional hearing protection that could increase comfort, protection and confidence. The Adflo™ System wasn't just going to change how workers were protected — it was going to change the way they worked.

"One of the differentiators for us was the level of service that 3M provided. It felt like they were trying to come up with the best solution for us rather than just selling us something."

Dave Harvey

Director of Environment, Health and Safety

Dave knew that his workers might not be open to change or trying something new, so he asked 3M to help train employees and get them comfortable using the 3M™ Adflo™ Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) System. Their responses were positive from the get-go:

- Workers really liked the range of vision the system offered in their hectic and hazardous environment
- The integration of a welding helmet with a face shield was a big hit — saving them the hassle of changing gear between tasks
- The integrated respirator was a huge deal — no fogging, more comfort, and even getting to have some facial hair were big pluses

Now Dave's crew can get into tight spaces with less equipment, raise their welding shields in certain locations without risking exposure and work more comfortably for longer periods of time. The benefits of comfort plus added eye protection did not go unnoticed — by other workers or the safety

management team. More and more workers started asking for the 3M™ Adflo™ Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) System.

Greenbrier's partnership with 3M has given them the confidence of knowing they're not only meeting the requirements of respiratory protection — they are helping to create better working conditions for their employees. As a result, they have introduced 3M™ Adflo™ Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) Systems to multiple manufacturing facilities in the U.S. and Mexico. The benefit of these systems for Greenbrier has been tremendous.

"They couldn't pay me to go back to the old way."

Jake Martin
Welder

Click here to hear what welders think about 3M™ Adflo™ PAPRs.

Previously Featured on 3M Personal Safety Division's website.

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