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One-on-One visit with Dolber's Ocean State Hot Coat

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Since its inception several years ago, our One-on-One business program has afforded our economic development staff and me the chance to visit a wide range of companies throughout Warwick. One of our most recent visits brought us to Ocean State Hot Coat, a growing business tucked away in the Pawtuxet Industrial Park in the northern part of the city.

Ocean State Hot Coat, owned by former auto body repairman Matthew Dolber, is a company specializing in powder coating services and boasts big commercial clients as well as individual customers.

Powder coating, introduced more than 40 years ago, is a method of applying a decorative and protective finish to a number of materials and products. Using a device that resembles an air gun, workers spray powder (of a color specified by the customer) in a fog-like mist onto the piece to be finished. The powder adheres to the product, and is then heated and fused into a uniform, durable and high-quality finish that can be customized for texture and gloss.

A powder coated product looks like it's been painted, but the difference, Dolber said, is that it will last longer, covers even the most difficult to reach corners or nooks of a piece, and is far more environmentally friendly than other methods. Dolber said that the process uses no solvents and a negligible amount of volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions. Since the powder is dry, nearly 100% of overspray is easily retrieved and re-used and waste disposal is safe and efficient.

Ocean State Hot Coat has custom-colored motorcycles, automobiles, marine parts, industrial batches, lawn and patio furniture and metal items up to 16 feet long. On the day of our visit, enormous metal circles hung from a rack, waiting to be coated. Dolber explained that those pieces would be used as lighting fixtures in a well-known national bakery/café chain. They also recently finished coating a large grasshopper statue for an out-of-state library.

Dolber and his employee are passionate about the environmental and health benefits of powder coating, and take an obvious pride in their workmanship. Dolber hopes soon to expand his facility and hire additional workers.

Scott Avedisian is the mayor of Warwick.

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