

Dueck's Mechanical Celebrates its 20th Anniversary



Focus on service and quality makes Dueck's Mechanical industry leader in fabric covered steel structures

BY MYRON LOVE

In discussing his business philosophy, LaVern Dueck, president of Dueck's Mechanical Inc. of Whitemouth, Man., uses the analogy of a pie divided into three pieces. The pieces are quality, service and price.

"You can only have two pieces of the pie," he says. "If you choose quality and price, you don't get service. If you choose service and price, you don't get quality. If you opt for quality and service, you pay a reasonable price and everybody is happy."

Dueck has chosen to focus on quality and service in building Dueck's Mechanical into one of North America's leading manufacturers of fabric covered steel structures. In 2009, Dueck's Mechanical will be celebrating 20 years of service to its customers, and LaVern Dueck says that he plans to continue doing what he has been doing since 1989.

Early start

LaVern Dueck learned metalworking on the family farm near Whitemouth in southeastern Manitoba. "On the farm, we raised everything – hogs, cattle, broilers and crops," he recalls. "My dad did a lot of his own repair and maintenance."

As with many natural entrepreneurs, Dueck didn't plan on becoming a manufacturer. He had his own farm machinery and mechanical repair shop.

Dueck was approached by a feed salesman to price a shelter for one of his customers to house hogs. He was successful in his bid, so he built his first structure. As he sold more shelters, Dueck decided to move his plant to Whitemouth where he would have more room.

"The first two or three years, we only sold locally," Dueck says. "In 1992, we started doing some advertising in farm publications and exhibiting at agricultural shows in Canada and the United States. Sales grew from there."

Although all business is conducted out of the Whitemouth office, Dueck's Mechanical operates in the U.S. as "Giant Supply USA."

Diamond Shelters

Dueck's Mechanical markets its structures under the label Diamond Shelters.

Diamond Shelters are available in sizes ranging from 15-foot wide to 160-foot wide and whatever length is required. The Single Hoop shelters, 15-foot long to 36-foot wide, have a rafter made of a single structural tube. The Welded Truss shelters, 28-foot to 160-foot wide, have a rafter with a truss design. Both types of shelters have Pony Wall, Freestanding and High Profile models.





Last year Dueck Mechanical added 680 square metres of warehouse and yard space.

The tubing used in the structures is made of North American-produced steel with yield and tensile strengths that allow the structures to withstand heavy stress loads.

The steel can be powder coated with a variety of different colors. Powder coating provides a tough and durable finish

that gives each structure a bright, pleasing appearance. The steel structures are covered with a fabric made of a weave of double stacked, high-density polyolefin slit tapes, also produced in North America. The covers, like the steel structure come in a number of different colors.

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Natural advantages

Diamond Shelters offer a number of advantages over conventional buildings. The structures allow in an abundance of natural lighting while blocking harmful ultraviolet rays. Diamond Shelters provide the most cost effective space for a clear span structure. They can be erected in a very short period of time, which reduces construction costs. As a complete building, their fire hazard rating is comparable to or better than a building that is non-combustible.

Because of these advantages, Diamond Shelters are versatile structures that are suited to a wide range of applications. They are being used in the commercial sector as warehouses and manufacturing facilities; in the agricultural industry as equestrian arenas, dairy and cattle barns, hog shelters, grain storage,

green houses and machinery storage; and, by homeowners for car, boat and RV storage.

With the growing emphasis on fitness in our society Dueck's structures have found additional applications. The Diamond Shelter system has been adapted to provide shelter from the sun and rain for golfers at driving ranges.

Recently, a 120-foot by 132-foot structure was built in Calgary for use as a baseball practice facility. An 80-foot by 204-foot building is now being used as an indoor skating rink.

Concerns about the environment have opened up a whole new area for Diamond Shelters. A special finish was applied to a 120-foot-wide Diamond Shelter to cover a composting facility in British Columbia. A recycling company has just completed an order for a 100-foot by 240-foot structure to house their recycling business.



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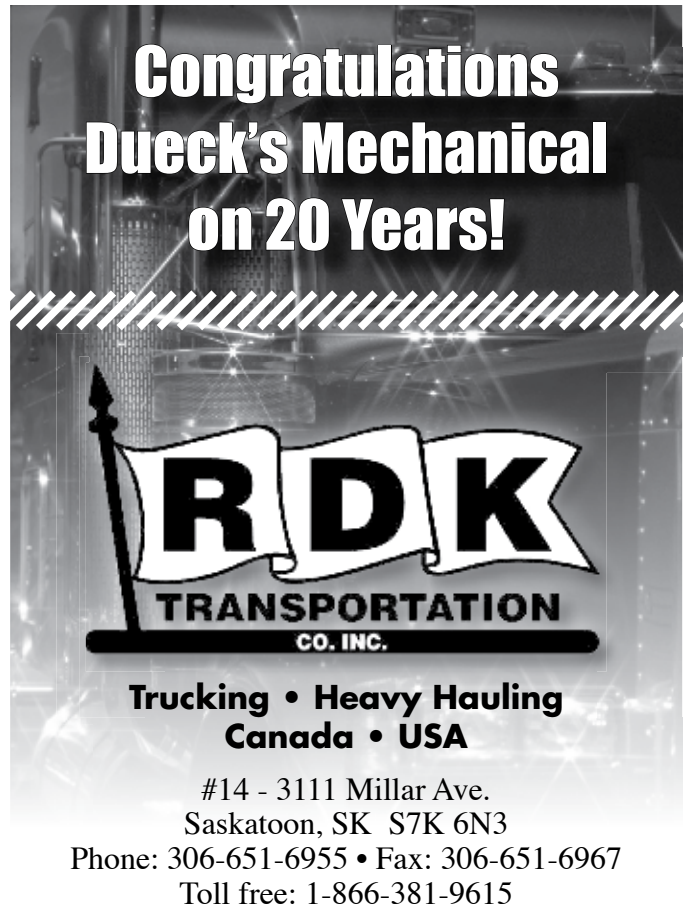
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No job too large

Dueck's Mechanical has proven it can take on large projects as well. They provided a series of shelters for salt and sand storage in Alberta. These shelters ranged in size from 80 feet to 110-feet wide with the longest being 264 feet. Because of the corrosive environment in this application, special attention had to be given to the finish on the steel framework.

Dueck's pride themselves in offering customization of their structures.

Offering this service to their customers has contributed to a large part of their success. Some of the alterations that have been done by Dueck's include end wall doors of any size (centred and offset), sidewall doors, awnings, roof vents, and end wall vents.

"We are trying not to grow too fast though. We want to be sure that we can continue to offer our customer base top quality and service." – LaVern Dueck

More sophisticated custom options have also been manufactured at Dueck's. A 62-foot diameter dome shelter was manufactured for a British Columbia pulp and paper company for hog fuel storage. Hog fuel is a by-product of the pulp and paper industry and is used as a supplemental heating material.

There are now several Diamond Shelters on wheels. These rolling shelters allow the customer to do the work inside, roll the shelter away, and remove the work from the site by overhead crane.

Site-specific engineered documentation is required on almost all commercial and some agricultural structures, Dueck points out. This ensures that the structures meet local wind, rain, and snow loads. It also ensures that the structure meets the customer's expectations.

Delivery times depend on the size of the structure and how many modifications are needed, Dueck notes. Smaller buildings can be completed in just a few days while custom designs and larger buildings can take six to eight weeks.

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Expansion

Dueck's Mechanical has added on to its facility at Whitemouth as business has expanded. The company currently has a total manufacturing and warehousing area of 34,000 square feet. Part of the manufacturing facility boasts an insulated and heated 60-foot-wide Diamond Shelter.

Dueck's emphasis on quality and service starts with using high quality North American produced steel and fabric. The next step involves using manufacturing equipment that consistently turns out a precision product.

Dueck is especially proud of the bending equipment that he and his employees designed and now use to form the rafters for each of the structures.


The final, and most important, key to delivering quality and service to their customers are the 17 employees at Dueck's Mechanical. On the manufacturing floor, each employee brings to the task at hand their own expertise, expertise that has been acquired through training and experience.

The resulting workmanship clearly shows the pride they take in building a high quality product. The Canadian Welding Bureau, assurance again for Dueck's customers that they are getting top quality structures, certifies the welding technicians.

The office staff provides the excellent service that is necessary for a successful business. Help is available for the dealers and their customers in choosing the right shelter best suited for the customer's needs. The production and sales staff design any custom alterations required with the blueprints then drawn by a CAD artist.

Easy to follow set-up instructions are included with each shelter. After-sales service provided by Dueck's Mechanical ensures that all structures are completed to the customer's satisfaction.

As Dueck's Mechanical enters its 20th year in business, LaVern Dueck is looking forward to continuous steady growth. "We are trying not to grow too fast though," he says.

"We want to be sure that we can continue to offer our customer base top quality and service." 



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