

Member Profile

Member Profile: Chemprene, Inc.

Year founded: 1950s

Location: Beacon, NY

Products: Manufacturer of light weight rubber conveyor belting, coated fabrics, diaphragms, and other precision molded products.

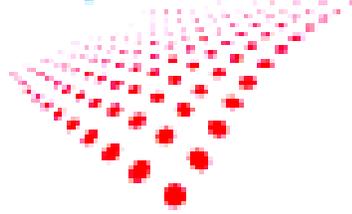
Website: www.chemprene.com

In the 1950s, Tom Martini, Dan Donovan, and Bill Shepard started a company, called Chemical Rubber Products, which would evolve into one of the world's leading manufacturer of light weight rubber conveyor belting, coated fabrics, and diaphragms. The original company was housed in leased facilities on South Ave, in Beacon, NY, and produced coated fabrics for the U.S. military. During the early years, the business grew rapidly and the management at Chemical Rubber Products instilled a tradition of working closely with their employees and buying the finest, most sophisticated equipment available.

For over fifty years, Chemprene has set the industry standard for food processing conveyor belting products. This light weight conveyor belting can also be found throughout in the package handling industry, and it has many general industry applications as well. With innovations such as Teflon coated belts for excellent release, butyl belts for high/low temperature capabilities, *Neetgrip* for transporting packaged products, and the *Meatcleet* for steep incline/decline applications within the meat processing industry, it is possible to find Chemprene's products at Tyson Foods, Interstate Bakeries, Frito-Lay and Del Monte just to name a few.

Chemprene's engineered coated fabrics are manufactured with a wide variety of rubber coating and curing techniques that have made them a leading manufacturer of calendared products and coated fabric materials. These products are used in oil boom materials for oil spill retention and were recently a part of the BP oil spill clean-up in the Gulf of Mexico. These fabrics can also be used in ESD products for the electronics industry, uncured hydraulic and fluid sealing materials for the oil drilling industry,

chemprene



fuel cell materials for automotive and aviation applications, and in diaphragm materials for automotive and industrial applications.

In 1961, Chemical Rubber Products began manufacturing diaphragms in a building on South Avenue in Beacon. The diaphragm line has since grown to be a major contributor to

Chemprene's overall program and they are the industry leader in the design and manufacture of elastomeric diaphragms. Chemprene's ability to design and manufacture specialty materials for diverse applications has led to their products being used in diaphragm pumps, gas and fluid metering devices and engine and fuel management systems.

Throughout the 60s, Chemical Rubber Products continued to grow and in 1964 it was bought by the Richardson Company based in Melrose Illinois. The name was changed to Chemprene, Inc. and by the mid 70's a new plant was built on Fishkill Avenue in Beacon. This new facility is where Chemprene still is today with over 225,000 square feet of administrative, manufacturing and laboratory facilities.

In 1982, the Witco Corporation acquired the Richardson Company and Chemprene continued to grow. Then in 1993, Witco decided to sell Chemprene to prune their assets and focus on other product lines. Fortunately a group of Chemprene managers, with an average of over 20 years experience each, decided to purchase the company with the help of an outside investment group. In 1997 Chemprene changed hands yet again, this time being bought by Gamma Holding, a Dutch based industrial manufacturer of textile goods.

Despite the changes that growth has brought to the company, one thing remains constant, their tradition of management working closely with employees. As a part of that tradition, Chemprene has sent several

individuals through the Council of Industry Certificate in Manufacturing Leadership Program.

Many of their current managers and supervisors are graduates of the program and as a result have shared training in many areas which creates common ground and shared skill sets. The result is very low turnover and improved communication and production. It is these employee relationships, combined with Chemprene's focus on improving the manufacturing process and a commitment to work in partnership with their customers to provide superior products that have lead to Chemprene's success.



This photo shows a double band rotocure (which makes smooth white cover food grade belts) at **Chemprene, Inc.** Chemprene has been manufacturing coated fabrics, conveyor belting, and automotive and industrial diaphragms since the 1950s in Beacon.



The current Chemprene facility in Beacon, NY.