



News Release

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S.J. Smith Company, Inc., wins national safety award

S.J. Smith Company, Inc., awarded the 2018 CGA & GAWDA Distributor Safety Award for companies with more than 100,000 employee exposure hours.



S.J. Smith Company, Inc., President and CEO Richelle Smith-Brecht accepts the 2018 CGA & GAWDA Distributor Safety Award at the GAWDA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. Oct. 1.

DAVENPORT, IOWA (October 1, 2019) – S.J. Smith Company, Inc., based in Davenport, Iowa, was awarded the 2018 CGA & GAWDA Distributor Safety Award for companies with more than 100,000 employee exposure hours on Monday, Sept. 30, at the 2019 GAWDA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

The CGA & GAWDA Distributor Safety Award is based on five years of safety data provided by participating companies, and uses an improvement ratio calculation to compare the sum of total recordable case incidence rates of the two most recent years, with the three most remote years, to determine improvement in safety performance. Awarded to companies that show the greatest improvement in safety performance, the award is presented in two categories based on the total number of employee exposure hours.

CEO and President Richelle Smith-Brecht accepted the award on behalf of the company.



"I'm honored to accept this award on behalf of S.J. Smith Company. Safety is one of our three core values, along with honesty and integrity, and customer-driven excellence. We want our employees and the public to be as safe as possible, and that's why we have such a diligent review and training process," Smith-Brecht says.

In 2016, Safety Director Jim Graber and consultant Ralph Johanson, along with CEO and President Richelle Smith-Brecht, worked to identify safety issues throughout the company. Through monthly safety review meetings to examine procedures, the team created solutions to reduce risk. Safety hazard checks were put in place. Examples include "Take 5", a process for employees to take five steps back from a procedure and take five minutes to go through a checklist of possible hazards. The company also built specialized aluminum ramps for the route drivers to help with delivering cylinders into raised or palletized storage racks, and added more driver training, including an annual full day road test for each driver, in addition to federal and state requirements.

Due to the increased training and safety measures, company incident rates went from an average of seven OSHA cases per year prior to 2016 down to two in 2017 and one in 2018.

"Safety and training is a priority for everyone in the company. Each of our employees has two full days of safety training each year, plus additional training for forklifts. Our goal is for everyone to go home safely every day. We're so glad the efforts we have put in over the past few years have paid off," Smith-Brecht added.

For more information, please contact S.J. Smith at 563-324-5237, or visit our website at sjsmith.com. Also, connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

About S.J. Smith

Since 1950, S.J. Smith has evolved into a dynamic company, using the latest technology to find cutting-edge solutions for customers and provide quality products in a prompt and professional manner. In addition to being a primary provider of cylinder and specialty gas options, including industrial, medical, micro-bulk and laser-assist systems, and cryogenic and technical services, S.J. Smith also provides welding equipment, protective gear and accessories for specific needs such as TIG and MIG welding, arc gouging, plasma cutting and more.

Founded by Sylvester "S.J." and Helen Smith, and expanded by their son Richard Smith, who joined the company in 1969, the company is now led by the third generation: Richelle Smith-Brecht, president and CEO; Eric Smith, director of operations, and Christopher Smith, assistant pricing manager/expediter. S.J. Smith has 12 locations in Iowa, Illinois and Missouri which provide individualized service to customers large and small, based on the company values of honesty and integrity, customer-driven excellence, flexibility and safety.

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