



Suppliers jumping on board with COR™

Winroc-SPI and its parent company, Superior Plus, have been leaders in their industry for decades. The achievement of being the first construction supply company to become certified through Ontario's Certificate of Recognition (COR™) program is right in line with the company's tradition of breaking new ground.

Winroc-SPI is an acoustical, insulation, and drywall supplier that started in Winnipeg in 1971. The company quickly grew to 34 locations across western Canada and the United States. Winroc-SPI was acquired by Superior Plus in June 2004, and that allowed it to further expand its operations in Ontario and across the United States. It now has 1,500 employees, 150 of them in Ontario.

Winroc-SPI is COR™ certified in every province in which it operates. It started with COR™ in Alberta 10 years ago. The company first gained its Ontario COR™ from IHSA in January 2013 and recently completed its second external audit. Now it's encouraging other supply companies to do the same in order to create safer work environments.

"We're very proactive. We do a lot of training and professional development with IHSA, so we heard about COR™ early on. It just seemed like something we should do," said Philip Lakatos, Winroc-SPI's Safety Coordinator for Eastern Canada.

Philip just celebrated his 10-year anniversary with Winroc-SPI. While he was in school learning to become a firefighter, he started working for a drywall company that was eventually acquired by them. With a larger company, he saw an opportunity to build a career as an occupational health and safety professional. "This was not on my radar, but I'm glad it worked out this way," he said.

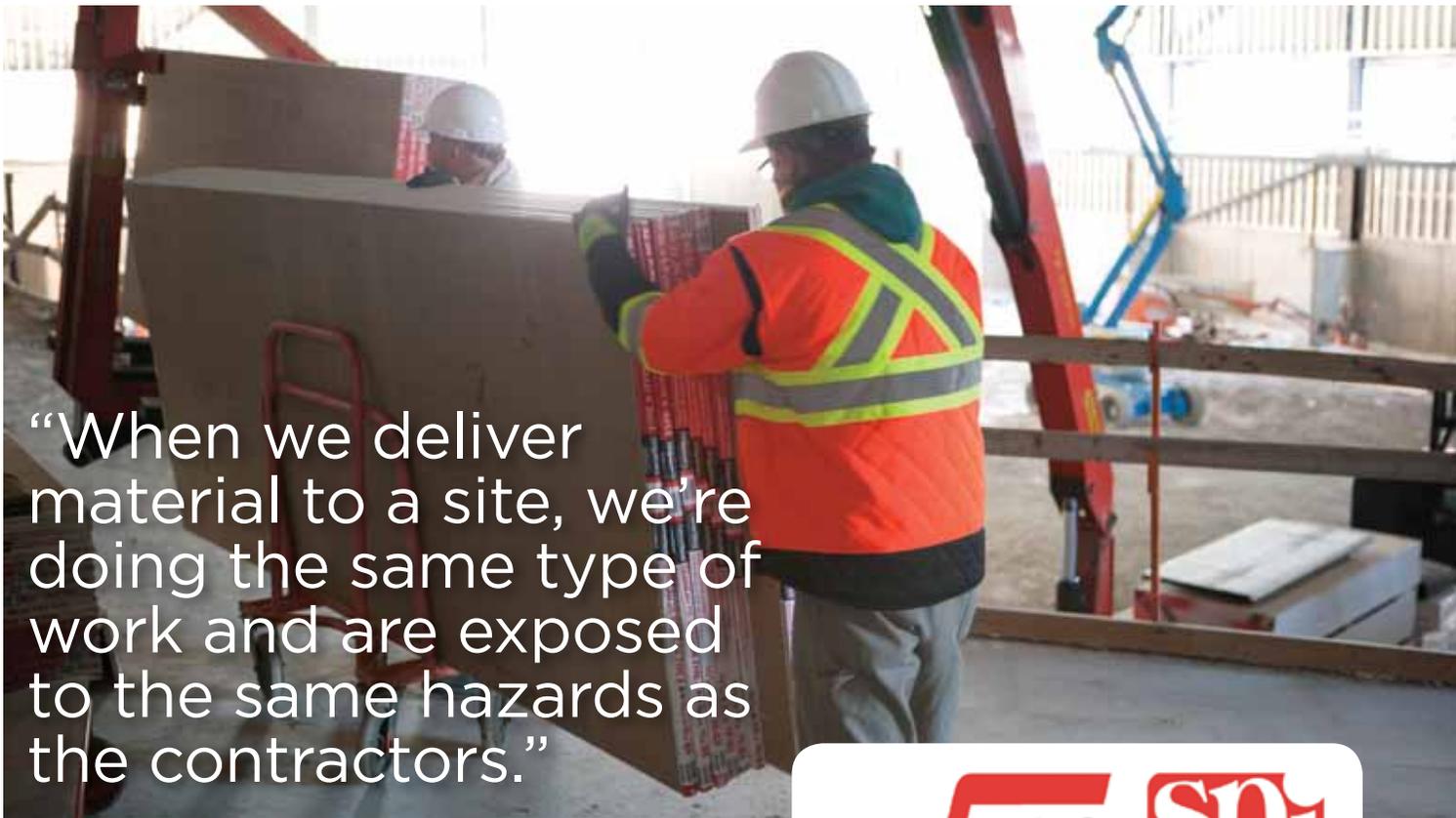
When Winroc-SPI decided to become the first supply company to pursue COR™ certification, Philip and his team welcomed the challenge. "Our operations live and breathe safety," he said.

Safety is integrated into the decisions made day-to-day. For example, if a customer requests a delivery to the fifth floor of a new building, we ensure the proper equipment can be used to make the delivery safely, and we do a hazard assessment before the start of every delivery.

If Philip and his team foresee a possible safety problem, the delivery doesn't happen until the risks are reduced.

Philip saw COR™ as an opportunity to find out how far the company had come with its health and safety program.

When you're working towards something—working hard at something—and you have an opportunity to measure yourself and see how you're progressing, why not take that opportunity? That's what the COR™ program offers.



“When we deliver material to a site, we’re doing the same type of work and are exposed to the same hazards as the contractors.”



We’ve worked diligently at building a safety program that’s growing and adapting. COR™ allows us to measure ourselves against a recognized standard to make sure that we are doing as well as we think we’re doing.

At the centre of Winroc-SPI’s health and safety program is a web-based reporting system used to record hazards that are identified, and how and when they are corrected. Workers and supervisors are encouraged to report hazardous conditions and near misses as they arise.

This reporting system allows for a high level of transparency across the company because everyone, from front-line staff to the president, can access it and see exactly what is being done while it is being done. The company uses the same program for its internal and external COR™ audits. “The whole system is driven by the workers and their operations,” said Philip.

While Philip saw COR™ mainly as an opportunity to measure Winroc-SPI’s safety management system, the company also saw COR™ as a way to attract business. It recognized early on that COR™ would have a significant effect on the construction landscape in Ontario.

“You see it with the Greater Toronto Airport Authority. The first page of their bid application asks about COR™. Then you’ve got the City of Toronto, TTC, and Metrolinx seeming to go in that direction as well,” said Philip.

As a supplier, Winroc-SPI doesn’t bid directly on large infrastructure projects. Instead it is invited on site by its customers, who are the subcontractors bidding on these projects. If the general contractors are required to be COR™ certified, it only makes sense that the suppliers they work with be COR™ certified as well.

By hiring a COR™ certified supplier, the contractor is getting a partner in safety and a cohesive working relationship. Work is done efficiently and professionally because everyone is on the same page.

The contractor knows that the delivery crews coming on site have a certain level of training, knowledge, and awareness. They also know that detailed health and safety documentation can be provided in a timely fashion if needed.

When we deliver material to a site, we’re operating heavy equipment, we’re working from heights, we’re hoisting material—we’re doing the same type of work and are exposed to the same hazards as the contractors. Our employees need the training to recognize and be aware of hazards during changing site conditions, just as contractors do. COR™ ensures they have all that.

As Philip explains, “We display our certification with pride.”