

# Expedition to Antarctica

Discovering Sustainability & Stewardship at the Edge of the World

By Delando Hawthorne

It was an honor to represent Akzo Nobel Car Refinishes North America and the collision repair industry globally on a life-altering expedition to Antarctica. I still pinch myself occasionally, feeling like it was a dream. As part of Akzo Nobel's Leadership on the Edge program, I spent two weeks in the Great White South learning from explorer Robert Swan and working with others from Akzo Nobel who represented different core businesses. We were challenged to become ambassadors for sustainability within the organization, and to use our new found knowledge to incorporate sustainable leadership into our jobs and everyday life.

Antarctica is the most beautiful and pristine place in the world, with an abundance of natural resources, minerals and fossil fuels. In the midst of this amazing place, we learned about the importance of recycling, renewable energy, and sustainability to preserve her natural beauty. During our expedition, we saw evidence of climate change with the implosion of a 10-story iceberg. And the sight of a humpback whale with his enormous tail entangled in fishing wire humbled us.

After spending time there, we all felt compelled to come back and tell others about the wonders we experienced and the importance of *sustainability* – finding ways to conserve natural resources without destroying the ecological balance.

We are all caretakers of the resources that we use in our daily lives, whether at home or at our jobs. As individuals, it's our responsibility to practice good environmental stewardship and use resources wisely, so they are available for the use and enjoyment of others, for generations to come.

While we can make simple changes at home and work, innovative companies like Akzo Nobel are seeking ways to change the very processes that upset the ecological balance



(Left) Delando Hawthorne with Robert Swan

and find better ways of doing things. As part of our worldwide initiative, we are striving to find practical solutions that are not only good for the environment, but also allow our customers to sustain and grow their businesses. One example that impacts the collision repair industry directly is waterborne and low VOC content coatings, designed to reduce the amount of chemicals released into the atmosphere. It's a move that represents a win/win/win solution for shops, their customers, and the environment.

Swan, our expedition leader, taught us never to be overwhelmed by the size of any challenge. He kept reminding us that the way he got to the North and South Pole was by taking one step at a time.

And that's the way we can make a difference to the environment: in Antarctica and in places closer to home.



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*Editor's note: Akzo Nobel teamed with Robert Swan, renowned polar explorer and environmental champion, in the "Leadership on the Edge" program. Employees from various Akzo Nobel Business Units spent two weeks in Antarctica studying leadership, teamwork, and the environment, as well as developing sustainable solutions for the company. Delando Hawthorne, Canadian Strategic Sales & Industry Relations Manager from Toronto, Canada, represented the Car Refinishes Business Unit. For more information on this fascinating expedition, visit [www.missionantarctica.com](http://www.missionantarctica.com) or [www.2041.com](http://www.2041.com).*

calendar

### California Countdown



Months remaining before rule changes go into effect:

SCAQMD:  
**1 month**

San Joaquin Valley:  
**7 months**

## Which Waterborne Curing Device is Right for Your Shop?



*This is the third installment in Rick Farnan's series on waterborne curing devices. Rick is Facility Planning Manager for Akzo Nobel Coatings, Inc.*

### AIR AMPLIFIERS, FANS & BLOWERS

Typically "blowers" can be defined as vertical towers with multiple adjustable nozzles for air flow direction. Each tower is directly connected to a blower, providing filtered air to the surface of the vehicle. These towers are fastened to the inside of the spray booth walls, along the sides, or in the corners, depending upon the space available.

The speed or velocity of air moving across the vehicle is dependent upon the blower capacity and the distance of the nozzle to the repair area. This blower/nozzle design uses existing cabin or plenum air and

has the capability of increasing the temperature at the surface by activating the air make-up burner. The combination of both wind and heat will reduce the flash time between coats.

**Hint:** Proper alignment of nozzles to repair area is critical to achieving proper drying. For best results, always center the vehicle in the cabin.

**Hint:** Depending upon the location of the towers, always check that there is adequate space outside the cabin walls for mounting the blowers or duct work.

This technology has been the standard of the industry for several years. However as with every product development phase, as the need becomes more demanding, new and/or different ideas begin to surface.

Today we are seeing spray booth manufacturers designing cabins with portholes in the walls or hip area between the light fixtures. These openings are adjustable in direction and receive filtered air supplied by remote blowers.

Some manufacturers are increasing the blowers' capacity within the air makeup to increase the air through the ceiling filters,

thereby forcing the air down across the vehicle surface. These blowers are controlled by a variable frequency drive – a device used to increase or decrease the speed of the motor, depending upon the demand from the operator.

**Hint:** Before making your decision on any specific design, ask to see a customer list of current users and a set of performance data sheets that show the velocity of air at the vehicle surface and the actual dry times after applying each waterborne coating.

**Hint:** Regardless of which device is being used, always keep a hand-held air accelerator available for hidden and hard-to-reach areas.

**Hint:** Always allow for the overspray to purge from the cabin before activating any of these devices.

**To summarize, first review your cabin design and building ceiling clearance for proper installation. Secondly, make sure that your paint booth has good balance and even air flow at the grating level.**

## Simcoe Collision Centre Upgrades Technology to Help Environment

Converting from solvent-based to waterborne coatings was a no-brainer for John Goodlet, Simcoe Collision Center Manager, Simcoe, Ontario. "Our philosophy at Simcoe Collision Centre is that whatever technology is out there to help the environment, we want to be at the front of the line to start using it." Goodlet has always been ahead of the game with implementing environmentally friendly processes. "Unlike years ago," he continued, "nothing is now poured out in the yard or into the storm sewers. We used to produce about 40 45-gallon drums of waste every year. We have now reduced that to one drum every 14 months." The shop recycles virtually everything possible, always pushing for zero garbage.



Sikkens Autowave® is the wave of the future. Another nice benefit of the new technology – waterborne paints are safer for employees to use. There are fewer solvents in the new paints and they are far less hazardous," Goodlet explained.

## Autowave® Frequently Asked Questions



*Richard Lawrie, Technical Manager, West Market, Akzo Nobel*

**COLOR** *Are there any Autowave color formulas available for Trucks or other Commercial Vehicles?*

Yes. Autowave formulas for trucks and commercial vehicles are listed under Autowave CV/Fleet colors.

*What causes Autowave color to change when it is fully dry as compared to wet?*

Autowave contains waterborne binder particles that create a bluish hue when the paint is inside the can. This is also visible during spraying. The true and final color appears once the water is fully evaporated. Accurate color judgment can only be made when the waterborne basecoat is completely dry and covered with a clearcoat.

**RECIPE** *Is there a special additive required for application of Autowave on flexible plastic parts?*

No. No special additive is required for system performance of Autowave on flexible plastic parts.

**MIXING** *What happens if I add too much Autowave Additive LP into a metallic color?*

Adding 5% (by weight) Autowave Additive LP (long pot life) is the minimum amount required to secure the pot life of the metallic colors. The spraying viscosity will not be affected if a little more LP is inadvertently added. However, if more than 10% Autowave Additive LP is added, the viscosity of the Autowave metallic color can become too high (thick). And this will impact sprayability, flow, and color accuracy.

# Cobb County Collision Center Goes Green with Autowave

Now the First Shop in Georgia to Spray Waterborne Refinish System



## Branning Autobody Catches the Wave

For Paul Branning, owner of Branning Autobody in New Jersey, "catching the wave" is simply a way to stay on the leading edge of collision repair. His three shops are switching to the Autowave® waterborne refinishing system, the premier refinishing system from Akzo Nobel.

Staying ahead of environmental regulations is very important to Paul Branning, but he's also concerned about making positive moves to protect the environment and the health and safety of employees and the community. "We've always tried to be as green as we can be, by recycling water and other materials, and using the most efficient equipment. So it made sense to switch to waterborne paint."

"When you're trying to make changes, no one likes the unknown. The learning process can slow down procedures, but once you get the hang of it, the change is worthwhile," Branning says.

Branning chose the Sikkens Autowave solution from Akzo Nobel because of its excellent color match, beautiful finish, and the training and support that he knew he could count on. "As an Akzo Nobel customer for the past 16

years, I know I can count on them to stand by us and make the process as seamless as possible."



*Paul Branning,  
Owner Branning  
Autobody*

Branning is in the process of building a new facility in Princeton and it will be completely green from day one. State-of-the-art spray booths were selected to enhance the way product is applied, and special drains were installed to collect particles. "Plus, we'll be spraying Autowave the day we open," says Branning.

Branning says his customers are pleased that the shop has made the switch to waterborne. "People are very conscious of green businesses, and any way that we can do our part to protect the environment and the health and safety of others is crucial."



*Chris Rath, Cobb County Collision Center*

Cobb County Collision Center welcomed spring by becoming the first collision repair center in Georgia to make the move from solvent-borne to waterborne paints.

The collision repair center, located in a beautiful state-of-the-art 44,000 square foot facility in Kennesaw, a suburb of Atlanta, repairs all makes and models of cars and attracts customers from the entire northwest metro area.

While collision repair businesses in California are required to switch to waterborne to comply with state regulations for lower VOC emissions, many shops across the country are taking a look at refinishes like Akzo Nobel's Autowave even before a change is mandated. The low VOC content means increased safety for painters and the environment. Shops like Cobb County Collision are also discovering productivity and cost-saving benefits as well.

"All the new cars coming in from Toyota and other manufacturers feature waterborne finishes right out of the factory. And it's a better choice for the environment," said Chris Rath, Collision Repair Center Director for Cobb County Collision. "It simply makes sense for us to spray waterborne now, there's no reason to wait."

### AUTOWAVE PERFORMS FLAWLESSLY

The performance of Autowave has left even the most experienced painters amazed. "It's very blendable, doesn't leave any tones, and blends in spectacularly with the original finish. Even color matches seem to work better with waterborne." Akzo Nobel offers more than 34,000 color matches, and an online system helps you make the right match.

Painters were also very impressed with the ease of working with metallics. They discovered spot repairs performed using Autowave on metallics were flawless.

### SAVES PRODUCTION TIME, LOWERS UTILITY COSTS

Rath says that Autowave has helped to cut production time by 30-40% because the wet-on-wet process means less time is required for drying between coats. "In the new spray booth using the waterborne system, we expect to see our utility bills cut by 30-40% as well." Rath says that Cobb County Collision repairs approximately 50 cars a week, or 200 a month, so the added productivity and savings in utility costs should have a dramatic impact on the bottom line.

### CUSTOMERS LOVE "GREEN"

According to Rath, Cobb Collision Repair customers are pleased the business is adopting greener practices that are safer for the community. Many have

read that almost every new car coming from the factory features waterborne coatings these days, so they are very comfortable with the idea and the refinish quality.



## What Sikkens Customers are Saying About Their Autowave Experience ...



“The conversion to Autowave was simple and painless, within 48 hours my painter was spraying it almost flawlessly. I appreciate the service and support from all the people at Akzo Nobel.”

**Roni Gill,**  
**Owner**  
**101 Collision**  
**Newbury Park, CA**



“Autowave’s performance is fantastic – it’s every bit as good if not better than solvent-based paints. The color match is right on. The painters have no problem matching colors, even the pearls. It lays down on the panel easily. We really like this product.”

**Jeff Long,**  
**Bodyshop Manager**  
**Caliber Collision**  
**Center**  
**Chino, CA**



“We’ve been using Autowave in our centers for over a year. Akzo Nobel’s training was superior and the technical support is impressive. Autowave is an exceptional product and an environmentally-conscious choice. Over a two month period, we recently experienced the highest amount of sales produced per day in our company’s history.”

**Ron Villard,**  
**Regional Manager**  
**Caliber Collision**  
**Center**  
**Chino, CA**



“With Autowave, spot repairs on metallics are virtually invisible.”

**Wayne Griffin,**  
**Painter (Left)**  
**Charlie Adam,**  
**Painter (Right)**  
**Cobb County**  
**Collision Center**  
**Kennesaw, GA**



“With natural gas prices at an all-time high, heating our booths is very expensive. Autowave’s wet-on-wet process saves our painters time in the booth, cutting booth time by 30-35%. This is a tremendous savings in the cost of utilities as well as an increase in our production.”

**Chris Raft,**  
**Collision Center**  
**Director**  
**Cobb County**  
**Collision Center**  
**Kennesaw, GA**



“The conversion was seamless with no drop in production. It has excellent color match; I’ve seen an increase in GP% due to no more re-dos on color match. Quick repairs on scratches or bogymen mistakes are easier and quicker to get out of the shop. The jobs are coming out cleaner with less buffing due to how the basecoat lays down and final product looks fantastic! Overall, I would not go back to solvent-based basecoats.”

**Jay Flores,**  
**Owner**  
**Tony’s Auto Body**  
**Oxnard, CA**

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