

July 30, 2010

Fast Wrap asset protection firm coming to Canada

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A new franchise heading to Canada plans to wrap up the marketplace. Fast Wrap specializes in the “asset protection business” by shrink-wrapping giant-sized objects, including construction equipment and buildings themselves.

The company is now represented by more than 60 franchises open or in development across the U.S.

“We’re in negotiations to bring the business to all of the provinces of Canada, particularly near large population centres,” says Chris McMillan, chief operating officer for Reno, Nev.-based Fast Wrap USA.

Founded in 2007, the company provides a single service—shrink-wrapping objects of any size in fire-retardant, flame-resistant, UV-resistant, recyclable polyethylene. The business was established during a real-estate market downturn in Nevada, finding a host of construction-sector customers who wanted to protect both half-finished projects and idle construction equipment.

“We essentially take rolls of film, hoist them into position and drape them over the top of buildings, then weld the edges together using application of heat along the seams,” says McMillan. “For buildings, we generally use 10- to 12-mil poly that’s almost literally bulletproof and can support loads of 240 pounds per square foot.”



FAST WRAP

One of Fast Wrap’s largest projects was the five-storey South San Francisco Hospital.

It's not as simple as it sounds, however. In planning a building wrap, the company needs to consider the location of windows, doors, and projections.

“When you wrap an entire building, you also have to consider not only how to keep the building warm and dry, but how to ventilate it so people can work inside,” says McMillan.

Special fittings adapt the wrap to provide ventilation openings.

The company also supplies pre-fabricated zipper doors as large as six by six metres to provide entry to the premises.

If access needs change, the doors can be removed and new doors seam-welded into place.

Construction clients request building wraps for a variety of reasons, says McMillan. While the business got its start in distressed projects, contractors use the service to protect viable projects during construction, or have adjacent buildings wrapped to protect them from dust and other construction annoyances.

One of the company's largest recent wrap projects was the five-storey, 59,000 square-foot South San Francisco Hospital.

“It was an abatement job and they wanted to keep the construction isolated from the surrounding buildings, and most importantly, the patients,” says McMillan. “We set up an elaborate scaffold system and brought the rolls to the roof using the freight elevator. A 40 by 100-foot roll of 10-mil poly weighs about 200 lbs., so it's easy enough to move into place.”

A typical request involves wrapping tires for construction vehicles.

“You need to compare the cost of renting warehouse space to the cost of wrapping and leaving the tires in your own back 20,” McMillan says.

McMillan reckons most construction project wraps are priced at about a dollar per square foot: “If you're protecting a 25,000 square foot structure that represents a \$30 million project, then this sort of asset protection comes at a reasonable price,” he says.