

# Car-O-Liner Products Help MI Dealership Shop Increase Profits, Production

**CAR-O-LINER**

by Autobody News Staff

Trust, integrity, quality and reliability are what *Ed Rinke Chevrolet Buick GMC Auto Body Center* describes as the cornerstones of its business.

The family-owned-and-operated company, based in Michigan, was established by **Ed Rinke, Sr.** in 1917.

At that time, in order to qualify to be a dealer, you had to sell five cars a year, according to **Rodney Gajewski**, Ed Rinke's body shop manager. He said the first few cars sold relatively quickly and the fourth car was sold 10 months later. Eventually, the family had to pitch in to purchase the fifth car to keep the franchise alive.

The business continued to operate through the Great Depression and two world wars. During tough economic times, the dealership asked employees how much money they needed to earn, and they were later rewarded following the wars.

"During the 1950s, the business really started booming and it has just blossomed from there," said Gajewski, who has worked at Ed Rinke for 24 years.

**Ed Rinke, Jr.** is currently operating the company and Ed's nephew, **Fred Rinke, Jr.** is expected to be the successor.

In the early 1980s, Ed Rinke operated two separate locations—Ed Rinke Chevrolet and Ed Rinke Buick. When the economic downturn came in 2006, GMC asked its dealerships to revamp operations. Ed visited neighboring dealerships that were also going through facelifts to gain some ideas on how to re-construct his dealership. He also investigated new frame machines because the body shop's current equipment was obsolete.

"We weren't really sold on anything until we saw some shops with multiple Car-O-Liner frame benches," said Gajewski.

For the past 40 years, Car-O-Liner has provided technologically advanced collision repair equipment to the automotive aftermarket. The company provides 3D measuring systems, benches and workstations for structural and cosmetic repair, welders and riveters, and workshop solutions that include wall



*Ed Rinke Chevrolet Buick GMC in Center Line, MI.*

and tool carts, anchoring and holding products, and aluminum repair tools and equipment.

After contacting Car-O-Liner in 2010, several Ed Rinke employees traveled to Ohio to tour body shops that were using the equipment. They also visited Car-O-Liner's home office in Wixom, where they had the opportunity to talk to **Jeff Kern**, Car-O-Liner's president.

"We took a look at their facilities and they showed us various machines as well as the warehouse and a demonstration of how they measure cars onsite," said Gajewski. "We really saw the commitment to the product. We were a handful. We asked a lot of questions and I give them credit for their patience."

As a result of that research, Ed Rinke purchased two Car-O-Liner bench racks, one measuring system, a resistance spot welder and a workspace solution where they could hang chains, clamps and other accessories for their new location, which has been under one roof since 2011.

"This way, it was all organized and you know when the 'kids' are putting away their toys," said Gajewski. "Rather than having everything left around the shop, the next guy can come up to the rack and be ready to work."

Soon after purchasing the equipment, Gajewski said production in the shop went up and they were able to take on heavier hits. They also noticed that technicians had a more positive attitude. This prompted them to set up a second frame repair area. They purchased two additional benches and another measuring system.

"Production went up again and the attitudes of the technicians were very positive," said Gajewski. "We had an atmosphere where they were fighting to get on the rack."

Gajewski recognizes that change is often hard, especially for older technicians.

"Sometimes, they get set in their ways, but as they started watching people fix cars quicker, the quality of the equipment and the ease of the repairs ... they jumped on the bandwagon," he said.

The company recently purchased a fifth rack, another measuring system and a second resistance spot welder. They are also setting up an aluminum repair area with Car-O-Liner equipment. Not only has the equipment helped with cycle time, but he said it is also very dependable.

"Our profit has gone up every time we've added a machine," said Gajewski. "Every time you use it, it never lets you down."

As industry standards for repairing vehicles have changed, Gajewski said it is critical to utilize the best technology.

He said that having an owner committed to keeping up with the latest equipment, such as Car-O-Liner's products, and a great working atmosphere enable Ed Rinke to run a successful operation.

"The way our shop is set up with Car-O-Liner equipment makes a statement to the customer, the insurance company and also the level of professionalism that you are putting into your repairs," he said. "We now have a great combination of Car-O-Liner and technicians. It is an unbeatable combination when you go up against your competition."

## Ed Rinke Chevrolet Buick GMC Auto Body Center

Location: Center Line, MI

(586) 754-7000

[www.edrinke.com](http://www.edrinke.com)

### Company At A Glance...

**Type:** Collision Repair

**Facility Employees:** 220

**In Business Since:** 1917

**Number of Locations:** One

**DRP Programs:** 10

**Combined Production Space:**

24,000 square feet



*Ed Rinke Auto Body Center featuring the Car-O-Liner Bench Rack, Workspace Solution, Measuring System and Resistance Spot Welder.*



The Car-O-Liner Bench Rack, Workspace Solution, Measuring System and Aluminum Repair Station at Ed Rinke Auto Body Center.

**Car-O-Liner**

(800) 521-9696

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