

Ron Carter Collision Center Enjoys Excellent Color Match with Sikkens Autowave and Automatchic Vision



by Autobody News Staff

The I-CAR Gold-certified *Ron Carter Autoland Collision Center* in Alvin, TX, employs 27 collision repair professionals who repair around 225 vehicles each month.

The emphasis on quality makes them stand out from the competition.

Collision Center Director **Walter Tucker** said, "We fix the cars for our customers because we want them to be safe and to come back when they have a need. We stay busy because of our reputation for doing good quality work."

Tucker also firmly believes in grooming his employees and promoting from within. Both his shop foreman and his painter started as porters whose potential developed over the years.

Tucker believes, "It's the team that I've built here in the shop that makes us so successful. Everyone works together as a team, and that makes it easy to get the job done. From our paint manufacturer to our distributor to all of our employees, we have a good team with people who understand the business, so we work together to deliver superior repairs."

The collision center has been a long-time fan of AkzoNobel products.

Tucker reported, "Switching to Sikkens in 2008 is one of the best things we've ever done. The quality and color-matching are excellent, and we were surprised by how much better it was than the product we were using before. Converting to Sikkens waterborne has proven to be a great business decision for us!

"Sikkens offers one of the best products from a quality standpoint—there are no returns and no peeling paint, and AkzoNobel delivers great customer service. We've tried many brands, but they're the best out there. It also helps that they are always available to help us. When they initially demonstrated the product, it was so easy that the painters' only concern was why we hadn't implemented it sooner."

Around the same time that it converted to Sikkens, Ron Carter Collision Center began using AkzoNobel's Automatchic Vision digi-



Ron Carter's painters are impressed with the ease of use and color-matching capabilities of Sikkens.

tal color retrieval tool and variant decks.

"AkzoNobel offers more variances in color than any other manufacturer I've seen—there are so many choices to pick from. AkzoNobel does a really great job of keeping the variant deck up-to-date," Tucker shared. "We have begun using the Automatchic spectrophotometer more often in recent years, and AkzoNobel has a lot of variants in their software to pull from, which helps us match any color. It's one of the best systems out there."

Tucker began utilizing Sikkens in the shop in 2008. As part of the shop's ongoing commitment to the environment, he converted to waterborne in 2011 before Texas changed the requirement.

"The main reason we started using Sikkens years ago was because of the technical support we received," he said. "Now our distributor is LKQ, who is here several days each week, but the Acoat Selected team visits us regularly as well. We have a very good support team for both our supplier and manufacturer that allows everything to run smoothly."

Staying aware of the latest information available is important because of all of the ongoing changes in the collision repair industry.

According to Tucker, "The biggest trend is all of the electronics. Unless you stay current on how those items need to be repaired, you have a hard battle in front of you. Parts are up to 45 percent of sales every month be-

cause of all the electronic parts. We pre- and post-scan every single car that was manufactured in 2012 forward, and although we often have to fight with the insurance companies to get paid for it, we do it anyway so that we can guarantee we are performing the best possible repair for our customers.

"Repairing to OEM specifications to ensure customers' safety is another hot topic right now. Shops have to fix cars the proper way and stand up to the insurance companies to help them understand that this is how it has to be done. We do a complete disassembly on every vehicle and do not start working on a car until the parts arrive. It's been a difficult transition since we implemented this process, but it's worth it."

Tucker obtains many of his ideas for process improvements from the Acoat Selected performance group national meetings he attends several times per year.

"The Acoat Selected meetings are very informative. We get to talk to other industry professionals to find out a lot of great information about what's going on in the industry and what everyone else around the country is doing. Based on what we've learned in these meetings, we've put a lot of processes in place to help make the business better, including our blueprinting process and the best ways to find updates on repair methods," Tucker noted. "I believe in the Acoat Selected system, 100 percent."

Ron Carter Autoland Collision Center

Location: Alvin, TX

(281) 331-3111

www.roncarter.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Dealership

Facility Employees: 27

In Business Since: 1980

Number of Locations: One

DRP Programs: Six

Combined Production Space:

34,000 square feet



Collision Center Director **Walter Tucker** has implemented many process improvements based on information he has learned during the Acoat Selected meetings he attends twice each year.



Ron Carter Autoland Collision Center's successes are due to the strong team that Collision Center Director **Walter Tucker** has built, including its employees; its distributor, LKQ; and its paint manufacturer, AkzoNobel.

AkzoNobel

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