

Osage Ambulances Relies on KAYCO Spray Booths for High-Quality Products 'Second to None'



by Autobody News Staff

Since opening its doors 40 years ago, *Osage Ambulances* has been committed to producing the best value ambulances for customers. Based in Linn, MO, the company is a full-service custom ambulance manufacturer, offering Type I, II and III ambulances on-site, as well as remount and repair services.

Kenny Fick, plant manager, said the privately held business is dedicated to putting quality, employees and customers first.

"It has always been our goal to create high-quality custom ambulances for communities across America," said Fick.

Established in 1983, the business started as a van conversion manufacturer that sold to dealerships in the central U.S. In 1985, it was asked to build an ambulance for the city of St. Louis, MO. The business built vans and ambulances for the next 16 years, until management decided to only focus on ambulances. Since then, it has worked with a network of dealers nationwide to help customers place orders.

Fick attributes the company's success to its focus on employees.

"A lot of the other companies in our industry are looking at the bottom line more than anything," he said.

Osage Ambulances takes a different approach and concentrates on keeping employees happy. As a result, the average tenure is about 20 years.

"From services and sales to design and detailing, the team has one common goal: 100% customer satisfaction," Fick said.

When the company started, Fick said it was purchasing aluminum bodies from a company that was also painting them. In 2002, Osage Ambulances moved the painting operation in-house.

"We were spraying in a couple of manufactured booths that were plywood and lined with sheet metal," he recalled. "It was pretty primitive at the time and they didn't have much airflow."

He realized they needed a spray booth that was bigger and better with good airflow.

After researching some options, Fick learned about KAYCO Spray Booths and found the product line offered a variety of spray booth configurations at



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an affordable price. Soon after, Osage Ambulances made its first purchase.

"Probably the biggest asset with KAYCO is that they built the booth custom for us," said Fick. "They met all of our needs and requirements."

Since then, Osage Ambulances has purchased four additional booths through its dealer, *Auto Body Color*, in Saint Joseph, MO. The booths are 18 ft. wide, 32 ft. long and 15 ft. tall.

Over the years, Fick said his staff has found the booths reliable and easy to use.

"Except for occasionally changing the filters, the products are mostly maintenance-free," said Fick. "The products are very good quality and KAYCO is a very easy company to work with."

Similar to Osage Ambulances' focus on paying close attention to customers' needs, Fick has found KAYCO Spray Booths has a similar business outlook.

Started in 1978 by **Bill and Kay Fowler**, KAYCO Spray Booths is a family company, owned and operated by their son-in-law and daughter, **Chuck and Carol Koenen**.

The company prides itself on manufacturing its products using high-quality materials and hardware. The KAYCO line of products offers a standard line of equipment, such as spray booth configurations, paint mixing rooms, limited finishing stations and accessories for automotive and industrial applications. This includes cross-drafts, down-drafts, filter booths and truck booths.

KAYCO also offers build-to-order products, which allows the company to determine the style

and size of booth that will fit the application best.

"If a customer had a product that is unique in size, we can build the booth to accommodate that," said Chuck Koenen. "With Osage, for example, the ambulance bodies are a little larger than the typical automotive booth dimensions can fit and we were able to design and build the booth to those dimensions."

The newest booth is a side exhaust down draft configuration. Osage's building layout required the heater to be mounted behind the booth. Koenen said this flexibility made fitting the booth into the existing space possible.

As a production facility, Fick said Osage Ambulances probably sprays more paint in a day than a body shop will in a month because of the size of the ambulance bodies and many customers requesting striping on their custom ambulances. Typically, the booths are used four days a week, 10 hours a day.

"In that time period, just with the bodies that we're painting, we're running through probably 20 bodies a month," said Fick.

He and his employees have been very impressed with the dependability of the spray booths, which has helped them stay on track with deliveries.

By working with a professional company like KAYCO Spray Booths, Fick said it enables Osage Ambulances to provide a high-quality product to customers across the country that is second to none.

"In the process, we keep our dealers and customers happy, which sets us apart from our competitors," he said.

Osage Ambulances

Linn, MO

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www.osageambulances.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Ambulance Manufacturer

Facility Employees: 125

In Business Since: 1983

Number of Locations: One

Production Space:

110,000 square feet



Kenny Fick, plant manager at Osage Ambulances, said KAYCO spray booths are reliable and easy to use.



The dependability of KAYCO spray booths has helped Osage Ambulances stay on track with deliveries.

KAYCO Spray Booths

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