

Checklist: Cut Costs Through Record Keeping

Here's a checklist of items to keep your record keeping in order for regulatory purposes, and cost savings.

Paper shuffle

- ___ Track the chemicals contained in the paint removers, solvents and finishes you are using by keeping accurate files of the Material Safety Data Sheets.
- ___ Record the items you strip or finish by revenue, time required for the job, date, and the customer. Do this electronically and you will have a good record for direct mail advertising.
- ___ Keep records of the removers, solvents, and finishes you purchase, by date and supplier. Compare those with the records of items you strip or finish in order to learn whether you are using chemicals efficiently.

Calculations

- ___ Total the prices you charged for the items you stripped and finished.
- ___ Total the costs for the quantity of paint remover you used during that same period.
- ___ Total the costs of finished used during the period.
- ___ Total your labor costs for the period.
- ___ Total your payments on equipment for the period.
- ___ Compute the percentage of your income you are spending on each of these expense items.
- ___ Is your price structure adequate to cover costs and provide a profit?
- ___ Improve your profit margin by using paint removers and solvents more efficiently and by reducing your waste disposal costs.

Keep an accurate record of any paint removers or finishes that are wasted.

- ___ Calculate the cost of this waste as a percentage of your operating expense.
- ___ Does this cost warrant action to reduce waste?
- ___ If you are wasting material due to deterioration, are containers available that can be sealed more tightly?
- ___ Buy in quantities adequate to your operation. Are they currently too large or too small?
- ___ Consider changing practices or purchasing new equipment in order to reduce remover and finish purchases.