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## Dust collection improves shop

by William Sampson

### New system clears the way and the air for increased productivity

Dust collection in Dan Yankowy's shop used to consist of constantly moving a couple of small portable collectors from machine to machine. That may have been fine when he was a one-man operation, but he knew his dust collection needs had grown with his shop.

Today, his shop, J&J Custom Woodwork in Stroudsburg, Pa., fills 5,000 square feet in a building he moved into about four years ago. He has three employees and lots of conventional machinery, including shapers, saws, two 12-inch jointers, widebelt sanders and even a single-end tenoner. The shop emphasizes residential cabinetry and built-ins, including staircase and trim work, and they build all of their own doors. Their primary materials are solid wood and plywood.

All that means they were generating far more chips and dust than could be handled by the little Porter-Cable and Grizzly collectors that were designed for much less heavy-duty applications. Yankowy and his employees had to move the collectors from machine to machine, and everyone was constantly tripping over hoses on the floor. Not to mention the lack of efficiency of the overtaxed collectors.

"The fine dust stayed in the shop," Yankowy says, describing the way it used to be. "You'd kick it up constantly. You can't get rid of it."



Return to come — Currently the new dust collection system at J&J Custom Woodwork in Stroudsburg, Pa., empties into a trailer outside. Plans call for finishing the system with a return air line so heating and air conditioning in the shop will function properly.

### Looking for help

Yankowy knew the time had come for a central dust collection system matched to his needs. He'd put off that investment as he slowly added machinery to the shop. He had told himself he didn't want to have to install piping and then change it at a later date because of changing his machinery layout.

But now he felt he had all the machines he would need for some time, so he contacted Curt Corum at Air Handling Systems to see what it would take to put in central dust collection. Corum worked with him to design a system to meet his needs and fit his budget.

Besides expertise in design and planning, Air Handling supplied piping and fittings. For the collector, Yankowy paired an old Dixie blower he had rebuilt himself with a cyclone from Blue Ball Machine Co. Although he had no prior experience in installing ductwork, Yankowy did the work himself to put it all together, relying heavily on advice from Corum.



## Setting it up

"He was very helpful," says Yankowy. "I wanted to do it right because it is quite a bit of money, but it's not as painful as you think it is, actually."

As the system is currently configured, Yankowy has all of his machines permanently hooked up to the system. The system is designed to pull the dust out and dump into a truck trailer outside the shop.

The next step for Yankowy is to hook up a return system so the dust collected can be filtered and the air can be put in the return system before the hot weather starts so I can run the air conditioning.

In addition to the machine hookups, the system also features two floor sweeps. "That's really nice," he says. "It's so much easier to clean up."

## What a difference

Yankowy says the new system is "100 percent better" than what he was using before. He says visitors to the shop notice it.

"Everyone who comes in comments about it," he says. "It makes a big difference in the shop."

The change is so dramatic that Yankowy says he wonders why he waited so long to do it. And that's his advice to other shop owners contemplating dust collection.

"Don't wait any longer. Do it as soon as you can," he says. "What I see in the difference in labor, even if you have to go out and borrow money, it would pay for itself in a short period of time. You can do so much more work with that (dust collection) running all day."

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Against the wall — Yankowy installed all the piping along the wall as well along the ceiling.



Lots of piping — For a small shop, J&J requires a fairly elaborate dust collection system to handle a single-end tenoner plus multiple planers and jointers.