

WINTER/SPRING 2023

Inside THE Diamond

AMEREX

NFPA

10

CHAPTER

PREVENTING
BLAZES

Before They Begin

NFPA CODES

Quality is Behind the Diamond



A Letter from Harrison Bishop

At Amerex, quality is a mindset. If you spend time at our Trussville headquarters, you will see that quality is the standard that drives us. Our unrelenting investment in quality radiates throughout the building and is visible everywhere—whether it's in the recent installation of cutting-edge manufacturing technology or in the attention given to our safety and environmental programs.

Setting a high bar for quality has always been a priority of the Amerex culture. Our powder manufacturing process is a great example of our unwavering commitment to quality over the years. In this issue, Russell Chapman takes us behind the scenes with his team as we

of each code, which you can learn more about on page 8. In our community, we have partnered with our local high school to build an outdoor learning environment (*page 5*) and hosted SWENext Girls in Engineering students for a plant tour and learning session.

Speaking of community, earlier this year we expanded our sales team by merging McWane International team members within the Amerex organization. The integration has gone well thanks to a diligent joint effort between our teams. You can learn more about our new international team on page 6.

The Amerex quality dedication extends to our partnerships. In this issue, we feature our longtime partner Brooks Equipment, an



Harrison Bishop
PRESIDENT AND CEO

“ Setting a high bar for quality has always been a priority of the Amerex culture. ”

focus on their steadfast dedication to maintain our powder mills and produce powder extinguishing agent to the absolute best quality (*page 16*).

Intense focus on quality requires leadership. Internally, we invested in a leadership development program three years ago that has enabled us to attract and retain top talent. We are also committed to extending our leadership outside of our organization. In the industry, many of our team members serve on National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) committees where we carefully consider the implications

industry leader that makes an incredible impact on the fire distribution business and in the Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association (FEMA) through customer training and innovation. Discover how Brooks is making an impact on page 13. We also look forward to working with the FED Learning Center on a new Amerex training series (*page 15*).

We always welcome visitors to our headquarters in Trussville, Alabama, and we hope you can experience the source of Amerex quality firsthand. Our sights are set on the upcoming National

Association of Fire Equipment Distributors (NAFED) conferences where we get the chance to visit with you and share information about our products and distribution business. Be on the lookout for email updates, and stay tuned to our social media accounts for more information about our NAFED booth and special events. We hope to see you at one of the conferences this year! 🌟

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WINTER/SPRING 2023



The Proof is in the Powder

Since the 1970s, Amerex has produced our powder in house under the careful watch of 10 dedicated team members.

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Amerex Hosts Hewitt-Trussville Girls in Engineering

Amerex welcomed more than 50 students from SWENext Girls in Engineering from Hewitt-Trussville High School. Organized by Product Development Manager Kendall Pate, the visit included a welcome address sharing the company's mission and vision from Amerex President Harrison Bishop. Mechanical Engineer Samuel McGuire and Logistics Manager Heath Posey coordinated the manufacturing engineering presentation, taking the students on a plant tour. Engineering team members Chase Arrington, Tristan Posey, Leland Jen, Nick Denton, Earl Bradberry, and Brandon Smith showcased projects in the fire test area. Product Manager Jacob Johnsey provided details about Amerex products, taking the

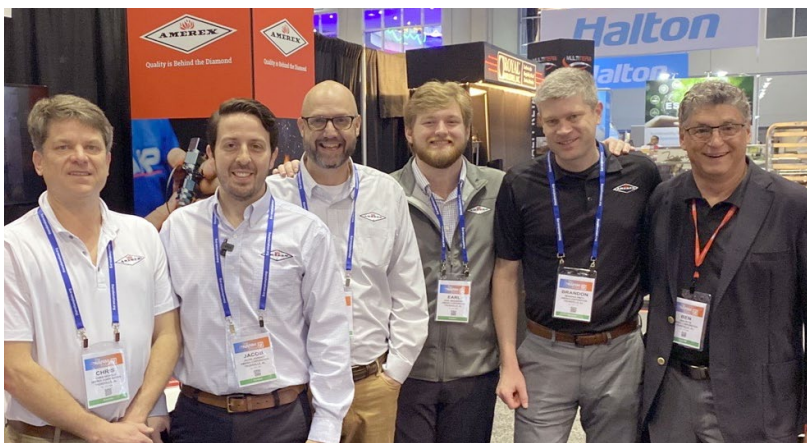
students through the product showcase area. Marketing Manager Susan Ray and Kendall Pate discussed the coordination between marketing and engineering and showed some Amerex videos.

Heath Posey and Jason Gregory also each had daughters in the visiting group! SWENext is a national program of the Society of Women Engineers. The free resource provides students access to programs, mentors, and resources designed to develop leadership skills and the self-confidence to explore the engineering and technology industry.



Hello Again, NAFEM!

The Amerex team was pleased to attend the North American Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers (NAFEM) 2023 Conference in Orlando, Florida, in early February. After the 2021 NAFEM conference was canceled, it was great to reconnect with our many friends in the restaurant industry. We showed the various options that Amerex has in restaurant systems and learned more about their products.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Chris Nichols, Jacob Johnsey, Jamie Knowles, Earl Bradberry, Brandon Smith, and Ben Pitts

Amerex Outdoor Learning Center

Hewitt-Trussville High School recently gathered several community leaders to cut the ribbon on its new Amerex Outdoor Learning Center, a covered classroom for outdoor learning. The classroom was a collaboration

with Amerex, the Cahaba River Society, Faith Community Fellowship, and Hewitt-Trussville school district. Teachers introduced the concept of the outdoor classroom so that students could have better access to learning along the Cahaba River.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Mark Bailey, Alan Fulton, Jay Ghelani, Harrison Bishop, Guy Jones, Jacy Whitaker, Cheryl Hannum, and Susan Ray

Community leaders came together to create this space on the banks of one of the most pristine rivers in our country that will benefit thousands of students for years to come. The Hewitt-Trussville campus is surrounded by trees, and the Cahaba River flows on property. To build the facility, contractors found the clearest area of land, so no trees had to come down.



To bring the teacher's vision to life, Amerex provided the funding for the outdoor space; Faith Community Fellowship provided building labor; and ArchitectureWorks created the design.

Thank You, Guy Jones

In February, Amerex held a going-away party to celebrate the career of Guy Jones. Guy has acquired Alabama Wire, Inc. and will be pursuing his life-long dream of operating his own business. Guy has been a tremendous asset to Amerex, our customer base, and the fire protection industry during his 19½ years with the company. He is a recognized industry expert, has brought significant innovation to Amerex, and is an outstanding teammate. Guy has served on several NFPA committees and is the immediate past President of the Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association (FEMA). 🍷



LEFT TO RIGHT: Ben Pitts, Guy Jones, and Harrison Bishop

meet the International Team



LAST FALL, we were excited to welcome team members from the McWane International division into the Amerex family. Amerex products have been renowned globally as world-class fire suppression systems and extinguishers for over 40 years. As a part of the McWane family of businesses, we are thrilled that all Amerex global sales now run through our organization. Learn more about the team!

NOEMI ACUNA is a Trade Compliance Specialist at the Amerex plant in Trussville. She moved from Orange County, California, one year ago. Noemi appreciates time with her dog Bella, a 10-month-old German shepherd/labrador mix that is full of energy. She also loves writing poems and personal letters to friends and family to connect—and she uses snail mail to send them!

“It is very important to know the compliance rules and regulations to do business with an international customer.”

SAM BOYERS, Inside Sales Representative, joined McWane five

years ago and lives in Birmingham, Alabama, where he spends time with his wife and two daughters. They love the outdoors, hiking together through the various parks around the city, and visiting the zoo (which Sam says is top notch). One of his favorite trips was visiting the Hogmanay, a castle in Scotland, with his family for a night of feasting, dancing, and listening to bagpipes.

“I enjoy the variety of our international customer base and meeting needs across several cultures and regions. I am always fascinated to see the various destinations of our products worldwide. Communicating with

customers and colleagues in multiple time zones can be a challenge but makes each day exciting.”

ANN CHAI covers the Asia Pacific territory for Amerex as Sales Manager. She has been with McWane since 2020. Ann lives in Singapore and enjoys reading and swimming in her free time. She likes challenge and constantly seeks out new learning opportunities.

“There is a great opportunity for growth with all Amerex fire extinguishers, kitchen protection systems, industrial systems, and vehicle systems in Asia Pacific.”

MARK FENTON, Sales Director for Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, joined McWane in 2020. He loves watching football/soccer (big Liverpool fan!) and enjoys exploring Dubai, where he has lived for the past 18 years.

“We see a lot of industry trends that focus on sustainability, green energy, food security and building stronger regional economies that are less oil dependent over time.”



CHRISTIAN GROFF Sales Manager for Latin America, joined Amerex a few weeks ago. He comes to the company with more than 30 years of industry experience. Christian lives in Houston, Texas, where he enjoys spending time with his family. He also works with the Boy Scouts and likes to golf, hunt, fish, and especially likes cooking and smoking barbecue.

“In Latin America, I see large investments and growth in mining, petrochemicals, agriculture, and tourism.”

ALAN MARINO-MORE has been an Inside Sales Coordinator for eight years. Originally from Peru, he now calls Trussville home. Alan is a football/soccer enthusiast, and he loves to travel, barbecue with family and friends and eat ceviche. He enjoys spending time with his family and friends, and has visited close to 10 countries in the Caribbean and South America. An avid snowboarder, he also loves the mountains in Colorado.

“Being able to interact with people from all over the world to identify opportunities for growth while working alongside distributors continues to be a great opportunity.”

CHRIS NICHOLS is the Managing

Director of Amerex International, and has been with McWane for 17 years. Chris and his wife have lived many places around the world, but Alabama is home! They have three children—all now in college—so they are enjoying more empty-nest time these days. Chris enjoys family time, snow-skiing and fishing, and playing soccer (futbol) in an “old-guy” league. If you see him limping on Monday morning, that’s why.

Located in Villavicencio, Colombia, **BILL SILVA** covers Latin America and has been a Sales Manager with McWane for 12 years. He cycles almost daily and goes mountain biking on the weekends. Bill also loves spending time with his wife and 4-year-old daughter. Born in Colombia, he was made for international business—at one point his family lived in Saudi Arabia, and he says these early experiences motivated him to help others learn about different cultures.

“The growth of hotels and fast-food franchises in Latin America bring opportunities for our kitchen protection systems.”

ANGELA STALCUP is the Sales Manager for United States exporters

and the Caribbean, and she has worked with McWane for eight-and-a-half years. Living in Nashville—the country music capital city of the U.S.—she likes hanging out with family and friends and going to the gym. Before her career in sales, Angela was a paralegal for a law firm in Birmingham, Alabama.

“Tourism is picking back up in the Caribbean—almost to the point of pre-pandemic numbers—which means there will be more new construction of businesses, specifically resorts and hotels.”

As Business Development Manager, **STEVE WILKINSON** works to support goals in Europe and Africa of reducing carbon emissions. He lives in the United Kingdom and has three children who each keep him busy with various hobbies and clubs. Steve has lived in three countries during the past eight years and has worked with McWane for two years.

“Europe is setting aggressive targets to reduce carbon emissions which is causing a large shift towards electric and hydrogen vehicles, particularly in public transport and mining. A key focus is to support this growth with our EV and hydrogen gas detection products.” 🌿





PREVENTING
BLAZES
BEFORE
THEY BEGIN

**LEARN THE
IMPORTANCE OF
NFPA CODES**

It takes only 30 seconds

for a flame to spark and turn into a fast-moving and deadly fire, spreading thick black smoke across the interior of a building or out into the air. Mere minutes can be the determining factor between a manageable fire and an unmanageable one or worse—a fire that claims life. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and its committee members are our unseen protectors who work hard to ensure public and life safety, providing the standards and regulations for all fire equipment, buildings, designs and installations, from aircraft and marine vessels to gas stations and kitchens, and much more. Virtually every process is affected by the NFPA's 300-plus codes that maintain fire protection and safety amid evolving technologies and changing industry needs. Wherever fire could occur, the NFPA has a code or standard for it.

With more than 250 committees, the NFPA is critical to each working part of the fire suppression industry. There are many perspectives represented, from end users to OEMs to fire marshals. Each group works together to form a well-rounded view that ensures codes are updated and well written, and ultimately, to unite under a meaningful objective of what's best for the entire industry.

For 127 years, the NFPA has been devoted to providing the world with knowledge to help save lives and eliminate death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire and related hazards. Without the NFPA and the work of its committees, we would all be extremely vulnerable to the destruction and calamity of pernicious fires.

AMEREX and the NFPA

Many Amerex team members know the importance of the NFPA, and a handful serve on NFPA committees that develop, revise, and refine codes and standards—the backbone of what the NFPA does. Having the information

and knowledge to manufacture quality products correctly is essential to protecting life and safety. At Amerex, we do not take our jobs lightly, which is why we take each code and standard seriously, carefully considering the implications of every code related to our products.

With 29 years in the industry, Jamie Knowles, Sales Manager—Kitchen and Industrial Systems, serves on five committees with the goal of developing codes that effectively protect life and safety. Technical Manager Derek Wester has been a part of the Amerex family for nearly 23 years and has served on NFPA committees since 2012. A primary certified fire and explosion investigator, Derek has touched a number of departments at Amerex, answering product questions from sales

teams, customers, and engineers and providing the most current and accurate fire code information to Amerex team members so they can serve customers better.

“ WE’RE THERE
TO BUILD FIRE CODES
SO THAT BUILDINGS
DON’T BURN DOWN. ”

JAMIE KNOWLES

NFPA CODES

Jamie and Derek also train customers and their technicians on Amerex fire systems and the codes associated with them. “I just try to make sure we’re doing things right,” Derek says. “That of course applies to assuring that Amerex and our

customers stay informed and are abiding by the adopted Fire Codes and Standards.”

As Product Development Manager for Amerex, Kendall Pate says fire codes provide essential guidelines supporting the use of fire extinguishers and fire suppression systems for the industry. Without participation from Amerex and others, certain products may be left out of fire standards, leaving industry voids and causing unnecessary risks. “Fire suppression is a safety business,” Kendall says. “Fulfilling that mission is important.”

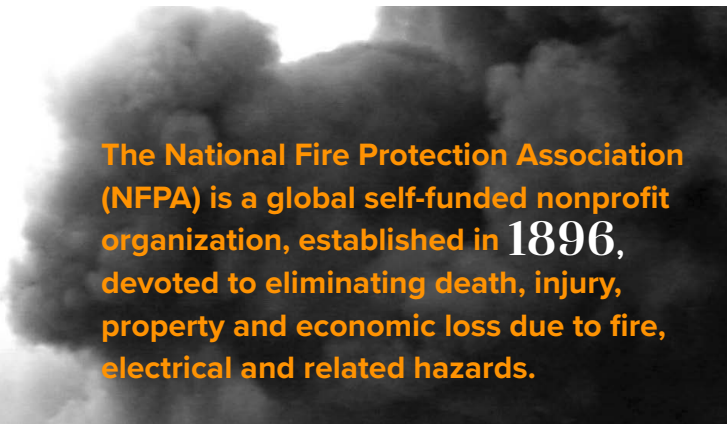
Our primary objective on these NFPA committees is to develop constructive fire codes that improve fire safety. “We’re there to build fire codes so that buildings don’t burn down,” Jamie says. As a manufacturer, it’s imperative

“ THE MORE WE SUPPORT THEM, THE BETTER FIRE CODES WE GET, THE BETTER THE INDUSTRY IS, AND HONESTLY, THE BETTER JOB EVERYBODY CAN DO. ”

JAMIE KNOWLES

for Amerex to provide industry specialists with sound advice and guidance regarding the use, maintenance, and installation of our products. “We want the code passages to work for the end users, for the OEMs, for the fire protecting product manufacturers, and for the fire marshals,” Jamie explains.

Our customers and distributors rely on these NFPA codes and standards, so Amerex members like Jamie, Derek, and Kendall make sure distributors have the correct code passages to do their job and aren't restricted. Distributors that work with Amerex rely on us to make sure they have the products to help make the world a safer place. Fire protection product manufacturers like Amerex work with other experts on these committees, answering questions and advising on how certain codes may affect the fire systems and equipment. Sometimes, a code change may provide further complication or influence a higher cost for a product; it's the fire protection manufacturer's job to make sure each stakeholder on the committee knows how the code will impact the industry. “We do our best to interpret fire suppression, which is a small niche thing, to a much wider audience,” Jamie adds. “Our objective is the same: to protect the way we manufacture fire equipment so it will protect the public.”



The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is a global self-funded nonprofit organization, established in 1896, devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards.

Several NFPA Committees Where Amerex Members Serve

From restaurant ventilation and combustible paint coatings to portable fire extinguishers and pre-engineered fire suppression systems, these NFPA committees cover a wide variety of applications and protect against various fire hazards. Other members of the Amerex team serve on additional committees for the areas in which they specialize. Here are just a few of these critical committees.

NFPA 10, STANDARD FOR PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

One of the biggest and most important for fire extinguishers in the country, this committee covers all aspects of extinguishers, from spacing to hazard levels to placement. To make sure that you have the right extinguisher in the right place, at the right distance in any building in the United States, you have to be involved.

NFPA 17 AND 17A, STANDARDS FOR DRY & WET CHEMICAL EXTINGUISHING SYSTEMS

Derek and Jamie both serve on NFPA 17 and 17A, a committee that applies to Amerex industrial dry and wet chemical pre-engineered fire suppression systems and the vehicle suppression systems.

NFPA 75, STANDARD FOR THE FIRE PROTECTION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT

The first committee Derek served on was NFPA 75, an important committee dedicated to fire protection for information technology and server rooms. “Most people don't realize how delicate server rooms are until they go down and how much is actually being controlled by those networks,” Derek explains.

NFPA 96, STANDARD FOR VENTILATION CONTROL AND FIRE PROTECTION OF COMMERCIAL COOKING OPERATIONS

The Amerex wet chemical system is integral to the

protection of hoods, ducts and cooking appliances that you would find in commercial restaurants. The NFPA 96 standard provides the minimum fire safety requirements relative to the protects hazards and systems in restaurant kitchens, including ventilation systems that pull highly flammable grease out of the air. Derek was appointed to the Technical Committee in 2021.

FIRE EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION (FEMA)

This association is made up of manufacturers that not only develop fire equipment but also build components that are used in fire systems, such as cabinet manufacturers where fire equipment may be stored. Their mission is to protect property and save lives through fire extinguishers and other fire suppression systems while educating others about products, their importance, and how to use them. FEMA works with the NFPA to help fire manufacturers collectively monitor codes and standards to ensure fire protection products are being represented properly. Twenty years ago, extinguishers were removed from the fire code for buildings that had quick-response sprinklers. With the help of FEMA, this was reversed to ensure extinguishers are still required as a necessity to protect life, property, and businesses.

AUTOMATIC EXTINGUISHING BOARD—CALIFORNIA

Jamie helps control new licensing and certification processes for technicians, which helps cover them in the right way so they can do their job. California actually writes their own fire code, and one of Jamie's main goals is to keep fire code simple, proper, and in line to maintain stable costs for distributors. "We're there to protect our business, to protect our fire equipment distributors, and to protect the end users from massive cost increases," Jamie says. The more California uses national codes, the easier it is for contractors to enter and exit California.

“...WE WANT TO DO WHAT’S RIGHT FOR OUR INDUSTRY, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE WANT TO DO WHAT’S RIGHT FOR LIFE AND SAFETY.”

KENDALL PATE

FIRE EXTINGUISHER ADVISORY COMMITTEE—CALIFORNIA

It's typical for companies to replace a discharged fire extinguisher with one that has been recharged instead of recharging the same extinguisher. Both of these methods have process regulations, or rules of the road. Previously, California actually had a regulation against switching extinguishers. Through his work on this committee, Jamie helped change this mandate so service technicians don't have to drive hours back and forth from their shop to each business

to recharge used extinguishers, cutting expenses and saving time and money.

"We took something that was not helping our fire equipment distributors, and we were able to effect change on it, and now, it helps our fire equipment distributors service the industry better without losing money," Jamie adds.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE (GRC)

As a part of FEMA, this group gets involved when the federal government or any state decides to adopt or create new fire codes. This protects against competing interests and provides the backing of an association of professionals that can advise on whether new fire codes should or should not be supported.

CALSAFE BOARD AND ORFED, THE OREGON STATE ASSOCIATION

Jamie looks out for Amerex distributors' best interest in all the work he does but specifically with his heavy involvement in these state associations for fire equipment distributors in California and Oregon. Their endeavor is the same as Amerex's: to protect the fire protection industry, to protect their end users, and to protect the way they do business, making sure everything is being done the

“ THE CONTRIBUTION THAT’S BEING MADE TOWARD HELPING OTHERS AND KEEPING PEOPLE SAFE ALONG WITH WORKING WITH SOME OF THE GREATEST MINDS IN OUR INDUSTRY TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL IS IMPORTANT. ”

DEREK WESTER

way it should be. Jamie assists as a factory representative and helps with training, product showcases and certifications, providing support, an OEM voice and the backing of a factory. “The more we support them, the better fire codes we get, the better the industry is and honestly, the better job everybody can do,” Jamie explains.

These are just a few of the many ways the work Amerex does on these committees helps companies and distributors not only facilitate business better to keep costs down but also help protect life and safety: the No. 1 goal. Our dedication to quality is carried over to the NFPA because we want to do what’s right for our industry but more importantly, we want to do what’s right for life and safety,” Kendall says. “We have to do what’s right for the industry. It really is about making the best safety products for everyone.”

Minimizing liabilities relative to Amerex product lines and abiding by the fire codes and standards that go with them is vital to our industry. Derek says the most rewarding part of his role is being a part of an industry that contributes to saving lives. His favorite aspect of working with the NFPA is being a part of a bigger picture: “the contribution that’s being made toward helping others and keeping people safe along with working with some of the greatest minds in our industry to achieve that goal,” Derek explains.

In the end, the work all Amerex teams do is rewarding, representing the best in quality. “Doing business the right way is the absolute, ‘Quality is behind the Diamond,’ for me,” Jamie says. 🌸

JAMIE KNOWLES
Kitchen and Industrial Systems
Sales Manager



KENDALL PATE
Product Development Manager



DEREK WESTER
Technical Manager



If you have a question about an Amerex product, we encourage you to speak with your sales representative who can get you the correct, technical information you need.

Brooks Equipment

In the Fire and Life Safety industry, it's hard not to know of Brooks Equipment, the market-leading wholesaler and longtime Amerex partner. Brooks Equipment is also one of the oldest companies in the industry; it was founded in 1941 by Steve Brooks and Charles Neal. The company was established on two solid principles: Offer quality products and provide professional service. The organization has absolutely succeeded in both areas, providing impeccable service that has led to a high caliber of customer loyalty that is hard to find today. Brooks Equipment has maintained this mantra for over 80 years, and Amerex teams have witnessed it.

Headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, Brooks Equipment relies on state-of-the-art technology and a hub of nationwide distribution centers to give fire and life safety professionals access to quality products that are needed to perform their work. As members of the Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association (FEMA), the Brooks team

The company was established on two solid principles: Offer quality products and provide professional service.

understands the importance of comprehensive fire safety codes. Brooks Equipment has a long history of advocating for responsible legislation. Active with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the company has five members who serve on a total of 10 NFPA committees. The industry-leading wholesale distributor continues to be a valuable part of NFPA code and standard evolution.

Recently, members of the Brooks team visited Amerex headquarters. Amerex President and CEO Harrison Bishop gave Robert Bell, President of Brooks Equipment, a full tour of the plant. "There's no doubt to anyone familiar with



LEFT TO RIGHT: Robert Bell, President of Brooks Equipment; Eric Smith, CEO of BHC; Jay Ghelani, Amerex Vice President of Operations; Mike Powell, Amerex Director of National Accounts; and Harrison Bishop, Amerex President and CEO

Amerex and their products that quality is at the center of everything,” Robert says. “This commitment to quality was front and center during the tour, from their manufacturing process to the people we met. Their use of technology and a culture of innovation were also eye-opening!”

In addition to providing quality fire safety products, Brooks Equipment offers customers quality information as a go-to resource in the industry. Robert says customers are always interested to learn how codes and standards change over time. The Brooks team works with in-house engineers and code experts to develop valuable content for customers and the entire industry.

“We’ve also seen widespread interest in our content designed to help fire equipment distributors educate their customers on the need for fire equipment and its regular inspection and maintenance,” Robert explains. “Specifics surrounding the applications and inspection requirements for extinguishers and restaurant kitchen systems are popular.”

There’s a reason Brooks Equipment has sustained their reputation of success for so long. Quality products, next-day delivery, caring customer service, regulatory support, and industry training have all contributed. But the primary reasons are how teams keep a watchful eye on innovation and are able to remain agile enough to embrace new technology. With one of the most experienced management teams in the business, Brooks Equipment stays on the very point of the cutting edge from leadership to production. Brooks is not only an excellent place for customers to

With one of the most experienced management teams in the business, Brooks Equipment stays on the very point of the cutting edge from leadership to production.

get everything they need but also an exceptional place to work.

The team launched an app in early 2022 that houses all fire safety products the company distributes while providing valuable information for the field. Originally designed to give Brooks’ customers a world-class mobile purchasing experience so they can easily find and order products on-the-go, the Brooks Equipment App enables customers to leverage all that Brooks offers. The newest features include real-time inventory and user-generated product lists that can be shared. Brooks app users can do all of this and more in just minutes. It’s a very simple yet powerful tool that makes doing business with Brooks faster and easier.

With supply chain challenges still top of mind, it’s helpful to see how major and successful businesses like Brooks Equipment handles these changes. One strategy the company has implemented is modifying the drop-ship policy, since more customers have been drop-shipping products instead of bringing them to their corporate address. Brooks Equipment also works tirelessly with Amerex to make sure customers have the products they need. It takes an unparalleled commitment to inventory to accomplish this in a very challenging supply chain environment.

During the pandemic, Brooks Equipment was integral to ensuring those employed by fire equipment distributors could work. They partnered with FEMA to ensure fire safety was classified by the Department of Homeland Security as an essential industry and then developed and provided an essential business travel form for those employees.

Additionally, the Brooks team created and delivered resources on the Paycheck Protection Program, Economic Injury Disaster Loans, and tax relief for businesses impacted by the pandemic.

To learn more and download the Brooks Equipment App, visit www.BrooksEquipment.com/BrooksApp/.



The Brooks Equipment App puts everything that Brooks has to offer at customers’ fingertips. Regular communication, such as the Hot Topics newsletter, keeps customers up to date on industry and company news.

Amerex + FED Learning Center

As the wave of digital usage grows with more people turning to online resources, it only makes sense to carry that over to the workforce. A total of 5.16 billion people, or 64 percent of the global population, use the internet. In 2017, the FED Learning Center (FEDLC), an industry-leading International Code Council (ICC) education provider, recognized this digital uptick. Fire and safety industry leaders joined forces to address recruitment challenges, such as hiring, maintaining retention, and training. They saw a need for improved technical training for the maintenance, inspection, repair, and safety fields. The FEDLC developed an educational platform that fulfills this need for more professional development. From kitchen suppression systems to fire alarms and extinguishers to code enforcement to exit and emergency lighting, these ICC-approved courses provide fire equipment distributors, code officials and facility managers with three types of learning.

- 1. On-demand modules** create a self-paced video online learning experience with quizzes to gauge learning progress.
- 2. Live virtual courses** allow participants to interact with instructors and other students.
- 3. In-person, hands-on training** offers the opportunity to work with manufacturers' systems to increase familiarity with specific products and applications.

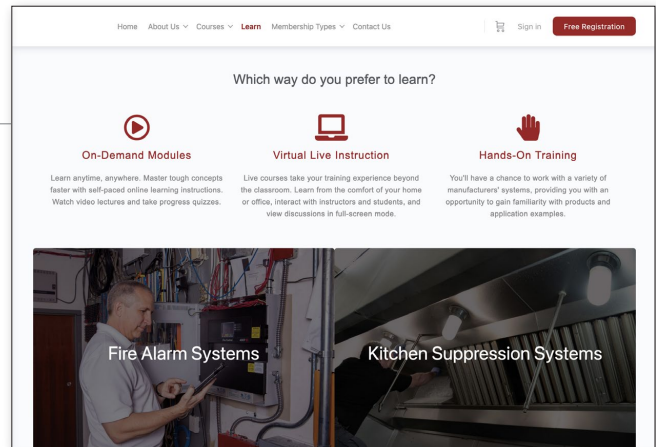
What started as individual hands-on training sessions for fire industry professionals has transformed into complete programs for businesses. The Amerex and the FEDLC teams are excited to launch Amerex OEM training classes. The FEDLC chose Amerex



Enroll in the FEDLC portable fire extinguisher prerequisite class.



Register for the Amerex portable fire extinguisher class.



and the National Association of Fire Equipment Distributors (NAFED) as exclusive training partners.

Before taking the first Amerex class, participants must take the FED Learning Center portable fire extinguisher training course to learn NFPA 10 standards. Participants who take the half-day Amerex portable fire extinguisher class will leave with working knowledge about company history and the Amerex brand; fire extinguisher ratings and agents; Amerex extinguisher lines; specialty extinguishers; and the parts, tools, equipment, and inspections necessary for servicing. Attendees will receive .30 CEUs, or continuing education units, along with an OEM fire extinguisher certification. The next class is Friday, May 5 at 1:30 p.m. in Cincinnati, Ohio.

"We are grateful to expand our course catalog and to come together with industry manufacturers to address training challenges," Wil Colby, General Manager of the FED Learning Center, says. "We know that the FED Learning Center's educational platform successfully supports the training and developmental needs of the fire and life safety industry, so partnering with the best training platform, with the best manufacturing partners, is a win-win for the industry."

Partnering with OEMs like Amerex has been a catalyst for advanced and specialized training courses. The modern, robust learning technology is great for single users and companies that want to use it to manage training needs across their entire enterprise.

"Our vision is to provide an industry-specific, educational experience that not only satisfies various student job requirements but also expands knowledge, technical expertise, and natural curiosity to help the industry evolve for a better, safer tomorrow," says Wil.

The importance of fire safety knowledge is immeasurable. Future fire professionals need to know how to develop, install, and operate these innovative and high-quality systems that protect our communities. Without proper industry education on products and application methods, everyone is at risk of not being able to escape during a fire before firefighters and emergency personnel arrive. Amerex and the FEDLC are committed to supporting industry education to expand fire safety knowledge. 🌸

THE
proof
IS IN THE
powder

UNCOVERING THE
HEART OF POWDER
MANUFACTURING



An exterior view of our 5-story powder mill that consists of 6 silos that house raw materials and finished powder.

“We have to make sure we have the best quality and that we are putting in maximum effort, because we are the heartbeat, and without the heartbeat, Amerex can’t run,” says Russell Chapman, Amerex powder manufacturing supervisor. “It’s just like the heart in a person. If you look at a person from the outside, you can’t see their heart. When you do an X-ray, you can really see the heartbeat of the operation.”

Russell couldn’t have said it any better. Simply put, without powder there wouldn’t be an extinguisher. The Amerex powder manufacturing team has made its own proprietary powder formula since the 1970s. In the back of the plant, the team is quiet, but their motivation and dedication speak volumes. The 10-member crew of unsung heroes produce the lifeblood of Amerex extinguishers. With seven team members on the day shift and three that rule the night, the team works together to make high-quality dry powder extinguishing agent in the safest manner possible.

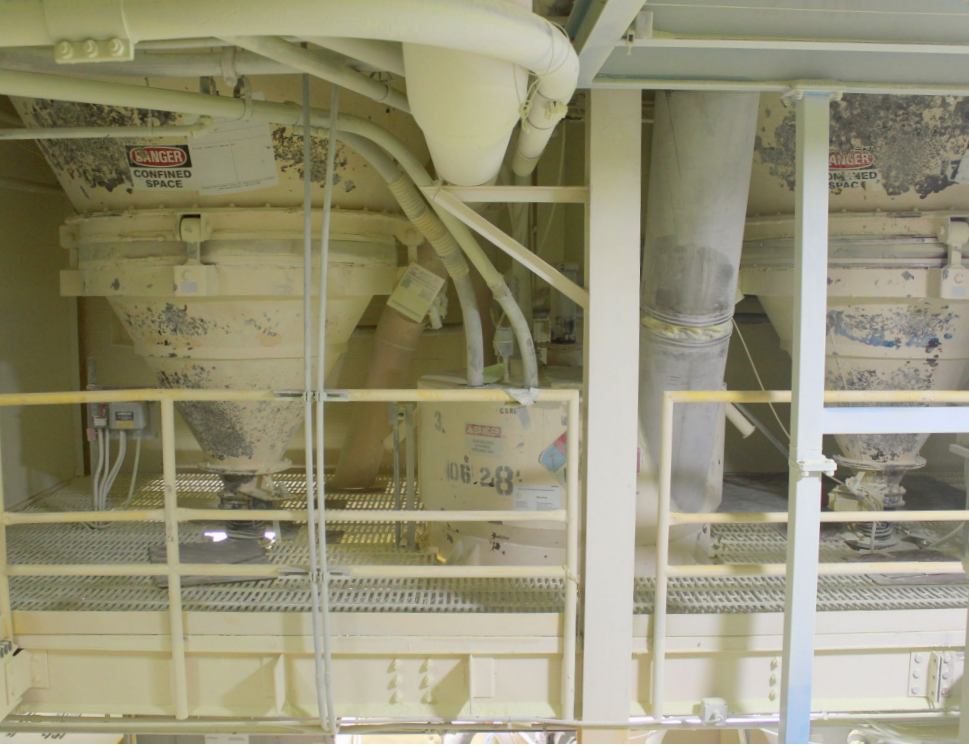
Jeff Layfield, Senior Production Manager, has known the Amerex powdering manufacturing process almost since its inception. He began on the

extinguisher assembly line in May 1977 and became the Powder Manufacturing Supervisor in 1980. Fast forward 43 years and he now oversees all manufacturing plant operations while coordinating with other team members to streamline processes for consistency and efficiency. One of those team members is Russell, who has worked in powder manufacturing for the past seven years and now assumes the role of supervisor just as Jeff did. Leading the powder operations team, Russell is responsible for maintaining the powder supply and testing each batch of powder to make sure it meets regulations and specifications. The team has a wealth of experience in manufacturing this powder extinguishing agent that is so vital to Amerex extinguishers. Together, they have more than 106 years of experience.

TYPES OF POWDER

1. One of the most common extinguishing agents, ABC dry chemical powder, is a general-purpose fire extinguishing chemical. The majority of the hand-portable extinguishers produced at the Amerex plant contain this powder.
2. Rated for class B and C fires, Purple K powder knocks down flames caused by flammable liquids and electrical equipment or current.





THE PULSE OF POWDER MANUFACTURING

The Amerex powder mills have expanded through the years. Today's powder mills produce 10 times the amount of ABC and dry chemical powders per hour than was produced in 1977.

Since that time, two larger and more powerful mills were constructed to help increase production. The original mill was repurposed in the 1980s and is now used for Purple K

advantage of not depending on someone else to provide that for us," Jeff says. "We can control the quality of it and make sure it's up to the standards of what we do. Making powder is vital to our operations."

After production, the entire extinguisher undergoes rigorous testing by UL Solutions, including the powder formula. UL testing shows how fast the extinguisher discharges, what nozzle size it uses and the size of fire that can be extinguished with

units. The powder department keeps enough powder on hand for production by making millions of pounds of powder every month. The pound rating refers to the amount of powder inside the extinguisher, not the total weight. To accomplish that mammoth volume, the team needs plenty of raw materials, which come into the plant in a unique way. The bulk of the materials and chemicals are delivered via rail car or truck. From there, the material drops from the bottom of the rail car or the truck into an underground tunnel where a screw auger transports it to a bucket elevator and into the plant. At the top of the elevator, the material is discharged into a chute that leads to silos or tanks for storage. When the materials are ready to be used, a sorting turn head helps move the powder where it is needed.

This raw material yields enough to keep up with Amerex monthly extinguisher volume. And the quality of this powder lasts. "Everything that we ship out is 100 percent," Russell says. "I know people who have older Amerex extinguishers, and they still fire off with no problem. If you shoot the powder onto the ground, it looks the same that it did when it was made years ago."

While technology has changed

“ We have to make sure we have the best quality and that we are putting in maximum effort, because we are the heartbeat, and without the heartbeat, Amerex can't run. ”

RUSSELL CHAPMAN

powder only.

It takes accountability and a lot of responsibility to maintain the mills today to make sure the company can produce the absolute best quality product. This steadfast dedication is how the company developed its motto that "Quality is behind the diamond."

"It's been important for Amerex to be able to manufacture our own powder, because it gives us the

Amerex-manufactured powder. "You can't put other powder in our fire extinguisher and expect the same performance," Jeff explains. "It really voids the fire extinguisher if you do that. Each Amerex extinguisher is based on our powder."

Currently, Amerex produces ABC powder that can be used in 2.5-, 5-, 10- and 20-pound handheld extinguishers and in our large wheeled

“ If you put all of your work into having the best quality, the product will speak for itself. ”

RUSSELL CHAPMAN

allowing Amerex to evolve and upgrade our operations, the way the powder is ground and mixed has not changed over the years. The grinder and the mixer are integral to the powder production process. “We make the best in the business,” Russell says. “That’s probably why we’re the number one fire extinguishing plant in the world, because we really do work to live up to the slogan, ‘Quality is behind the Diamond.’ If you put all of your work into having the best quality, the product will speak for itself.”

The powder operators and team members in the powder room have great dedication and pride in their work. Training is critical—to ensure safety and the quality of the powder. “My biggest priority every day is to make sure everyone leaves the way they came in; that everyone is safe,” Russell says. “Along with making sure we have quality powder in the silos at all times.”

Once the powder is finished, it is pumped to the product lines and into the extinguishers, which are then sent down the line for labels, valve assemblies, and brackets before they are packed into carton boxes and loaded onto pallets awaiting delivery to Amerex customers.

“‘Quality is behind the Diamond’ has been around a long time,” Jeff says. “A diamond is one of the most precious gemstones—everyone wants one—and really it says that

Amerex produces the gemstone of fire extinguishers. For me, it’s all of the people that work to make it a successful product, day in and day out. From the beginning to now, it has always been about the people. It’s a pleasure to work with all of these people.”

From valve assembly to powder manufacturing to painting to maintenance to the front office, it’s the entire group working together that makes the difference. Every person that touches Amerex fire extinguishers is a quality inspector. It’s up to each person and the team to be responsible for quality.

“We have a product that is so well made and so well designed that as long as you do your job properly, it will be a quality product,” Jeff says. “It’s very important to maintain quality because we produce a life-saving tool. It has to work every time you use it. A lot of the time, fire extinguishers are used to save property, but the main thing is to save a life.”

PROTECTING LIFE

There are three elements to a fire: oxygen, heat, and a combustible material. If you can eliminate one, the fire goes out. When you spray ABC dry chemical powder on a fire, it removes the oxygen and coats the combustible material to form a protective barrier using a monoammonium phosphate base that blankets the area and melts over the



fire to prevent reignition. “The powder on the inside—that’s what will save your life,” Russell says.

Other fire extinguishing agents that Amerex produces are for specialty applications like around health care equipment or in computer labs or data centers.

THE HEARTBEAT OF THE OPERATION

The powder team works well together and motivates each other to be the best they can be and to produce the best quality powder. Russell makes sure to show each member his appreciation and highlights when they each stand out. The seasoned veterans on the team set the tone because they know the team is the “heartbeat of Amerex.” Newer members have soaked up information and training knowledge like a sponge, really showing their drive to uphold the quality that is behind Amerex products and everything the company does.

If you or someone you know is interested in joining the Amerex family, visit the careers page on Amerex-fire.com.

meet the team

DAY SHIFT

Russell Chapman leads powder manufacturing and has worked at the Amerex plant for nine years. Outside of work, he drives an open-wheel modified racecar on the dirt track at the Talladega Superspeedway on Saturday nights. He has been a racecar driver for 11 years and recently won the 2022 championship.

Russell enjoys the opportunities Amerex provides. Through the company, he attended several classes at Kansas State University to get his certification. "Amerex is a family, so you are appreciated and seen," Russell adds. "If you have a good work ethic, you can take initiative in a bigger role. I think that's what makes our company operate so smoothly. It's all about how much you learn and how interested you are in making that step to take more responsibility."

James Cox has been a part of the Amerex family for 33 years, working

30 of them in powder manufacturing. He enjoys fishing, spending time with his family, and watching the Dallas Cowboys.

Fermin Duarte helps unload the railcars that carry the material and handles the housekeeping for the department. He enjoys watching football and soccer, and he goes running to help maintain his health.

Jesus Duarte operates mill one and has been on the team for seven months. On the weekends, he helps run a food truck that he owns and enjoys watching football.

Cardell Morris maintains 12 years with Amerex and is now a coordinator within the powder team. When he isn't at work, he drives remote control cars, fishes, and travels to see the world.

Dylan Vann has worked 11 years with the company and is now a Purple K

operator after only three and a half months. He likes to fish, play video games, and build PCs.

Derrick Williamson is the main powder operator for mill two and has worked in the powder department for 18 years. His hobbies are playing drums in a band and coaching youth league football and basketball.

NIGHT SHIFT

Darrell Calhoun joined the company last year as a powder operator. He likes all sports and comedy shows.

Jeremy Sweatt is a powder operator who started working at Amerex six years ago. He enjoys working on cars and gaming.

Cliff Watkins is a coordinator who can run all three mills and has 16 years of service with Amerex. He plays basketball and video games for fun. 🍷



LEFT TO RIGHT: Russell Chapman, James Cox, Jesus Duarte, Derrick Williamson, Cardell Morris, Fermin Duarte, and Dylan Vann



LEFT TO RIGHT: Darrell Calhoun, Jeremy Sweatt, and Cliff Watkins

Meet the Newest Members of the Marketing Team

One of our many goals at Amerex is helping our customers and distributors protect and grow their business. We strive to bring inherent value to our industry and our customers in everything we do. By educating fire industry professionals, we can help them build their own brands and businesses, which in turn establishes and elevates the Amerex organization as a brand that they can relate to. Our growing partnerships speak to the quality and innovation behind the Amerex diamond. We are happy to announce two new members who have joined our Amerex marketing team to elevate our commitment to our customers.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Mike Warren

Mike recently joined Amerex as Business Development Specialist where he will identify and target opportunities to help distributors build their customer base. Mike has 10 years of experience in the fire protection industry where he has held positions ranging from service technician to installation technician to inside sales

specialist. “Having had a hand in so many aspects of the industry will help me identify opportunities by being able to evaluate from several different perspectives,” Mike says. When asked what, “Quality is behind the Diamond,” means to him, Mike immediately explains it is not only about providing a superior product, but also about providing a better support system behind the product. Mike has been enjoying the work culture at Amerex and how the team is happy to help in any way they can so he can succeed.

“It feels like Mike has been part of the Amerex team for three years instead of only three months,” says Susan Ray, Marketing Manager. “He has jumped right in to pinpoint different areas of growth for our brand and our customers.”

Mike began his career in fire suppression after he saw a brochure for a fire suppression engineering program that looked interesting. That one brochure could never begin to explain all the experiences he has had in the industry since then. Particularly, seeing the amount of money, and more importantly, lives that could have been saved over the years by utilizing a proper fire suppression system makes work in this field very rewarding. Knowing how much value we are adding to the world motivates him. His number one priority in this new role is to help distributors identify as many opportunities as possible to protect lives and property by

adding the proper fire suppression equipment.

Outside of work, Mike enjoys cycling; hiking; playing disc golf and regular golf; exploring breweries; playing tabletop or board games; and simply hanging with friends.



MARKETING DESIGNER

Nancy Heard

With more than 30 years of graphic design experience, Nancy Heard joins Amerex as Marketing Designer where she is responsible for the branding and design of our marketing materials. Juggling multiple projects and deadlines isn't new to Nancy, since she spent over a decade at *Southern Living*


magazine in the in-house marketing department. She also worked several years at an advertising agency and on the editorial side of magazine publishing.

“It is important to me to design marketing materials that are easy to understand and visually interesting,” she says. “I want to create something that an end user will want to look at and spend time going through.”

Maintaining consistent brand design is also a priority for Nancy. “I am always trying to reinforce the importance of the diamond in the designed material to represent our integrity in every visual way possible,” she says. “One subliminal example in this issue is on pages 6–7 where the photo design on the bottom of the page indicate that we are all connected by the diamond.”

She says she is proud to be part of a wonderful company that makes such a quality product. To Nancy, “Quality is behind the Diamond,” means that everyone at Amerex is committed to doing their best work so collectively, we are a great team.

“Nancy’s passion for Amerex and serving our customers well is contagious,” Susan says. “The dedication and creativity she brings to her work continues to elevate the Amerex brand and move our mission forward.”

In her free time, Nancy is always looking for items to collect, from searching estate sales to scouring eBay. She especially likes items from the 1940s to the 1970s. She loves to garden and likes rare and unusual plants. She spends her weekends either painting or reading books. This year, she hopes to finally start designing the Halloween book project she’s been working on for more than 10 years. 

Welcome, Chris Bullock



The Amerex team welcomes our new Northeast Regional Sales Manager, Chris Bullock. Chris joined Amerex in February 2023 and will be working one on one with customers and distributors in eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. He is eager to maintain the strong

relationships that Amerex has in the industry while growing business for our distributors.

“Chris has a depth of knowledge in sales and business leadership and brings extensive experience to the industry,” says Ben Pitts, Vice President—Sales and Marketing. “He will be a great resource and partner for our Northeast distributors.”


The history and reputation the Amerex organization has in the fire equipment industry is one of the many things that drew him to the company. “Amerex makes a

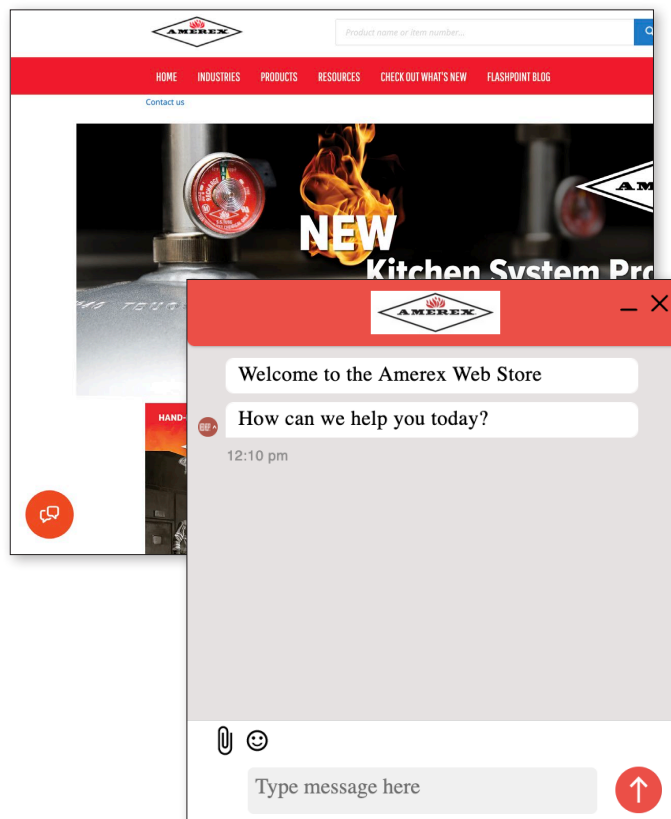
high-quality product that is manufactured in the United States and both of those things are very important to me.” he says. “In addition, the brand reputation itself has meaning and history, and I am proud to be able to stand behind it now!”

Chris attended Neumann University and recently received a professional certificate in executive leadership from Cornell University. He has spent more than 20 years in the fire industry and has spent 19 of them serving as a volunteer firefighter. This has given him firsthand understanding of the importance of quality fire protection and fire suppression systems. He has also worked in the fire equipment field for 17 years selling equipment to first responders and public safety organizations—14 years were with an Amerex distributor. He has a deep understanding of our customers from both sides of the spectrum and of the region.

Outside of work, Chris enjoys spending time with his wife and two young kids participating in outdoor activities together such as hiking, camping, kayaking, and traveling. His family enjoys trips to the beach, the mountains, and everything in between. He also currently serves as Deputy Chief of his hometown fire department in Pennsylvania.

New Live Chat Feature

As part of Amerex’s continued commitment to a great customer experience, we are introducing our new easy-to-use live chat feature on our web store. The chat takes you to a member of our Customer Success team and can be accessed from any of the web pages on our web store. Simply click on the chat icon at the bottom left corner of the web store for the text chat box to appear. Provide your name and account number, and someone from our team will respond to you as quickly as possible. 



events 2023



EVENT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	DATES
KP/IS Training	Las Vegas	March 6-7
VS Training	Las Vegas	March 8
NAFED	Las Vegas	March 9-10
Conexpo	Las Vegas	March 14-18
KP/IS Training	Online	March 28-29
KP/IS Training Online	Orlando	April 18-19
NAFED	Atlantic City	April 13-14
WasteExpo	New Orleans	May 1-4
KP/IS Training	Denver	May 9-10
ORFED	Portland, Ore.	May 19-20
NAFED	Chicago	May 25-26
NFPA	Las Vegas	June 19-21
GAPT		June 19
STN/Central	Indianapolis	June 2-6
STN/West	Reno	July 14-19
FFEDA Annual Conference	TBD	TBD
CALSAFE	TBD	TBD
APTA Expo	Orlando	October 8-11
AUSA	Washington, D.C.	October 9-11
HOST	Milan	October 13-17
NCAFED	TBD	TBD
PAFED	TBD	TBD
NJAFED	TBD	TBD

why AMEREX?

QUALITY

Amerex didn't become a global market leader overnight.

Our business has grown year after year based on our products' reputation for performance and durability in even the most rugged environments.

INNOVATION

Because Amerex is independently owned and forward thinking, we are continuously innovating and investing for the benefit of our customers and those they serve.

SERVICE

Amerex was founded on a mutual appreciation for premium quality in products and customer service and the importance of interpersonal relations.



Quality is Behind the Diamond®

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