

## Customer

### solutions

Industry: Foundry  
 Success: **Increased Capacity**  
 Company: Ford Meter Box Company, Inc.  
 Contact: Mike Jones, Foundry Manager  
 Location: Washburn, Indiana  
 Date: March 2005



The Ford Meter Box Company, Inc., based in Wabash, Ind., is a top supplier of brass valves, fittings and meter box settings to the water works industry. In business since 1898, the company recently approached Wheelabrator Group in search of an improved blasting solution for their brass foundry.

Ford Meter Box's finishing operation was challenged with manufacturing capacity constraints and elevated maintenance costs. Their existing equipment served as a pre-blast operation, in effect creating a multi-step finishing process. Ford Meter Box needed a complete finish blast solution to meet their productivity requirements. Application criteria included: increased operating capacity to support two operating shifts, capacity for 12 tons per hour of blasted parts and extended operating time between maintenance service. Additionally, Wheelabrator was challenged with a critical delivery date, height requirements and a compressed installation schedule.

The Wheelabrator® Group designed an in-line Rocker Barrel machine solution for Ford Meter Box to meet their requirements for their brass water works products. Designed as the final blast solution, the new equipment increased operating throughput and significantly reduced re-blast requirements. The Wheelabrator rocker barrel blasts and cleans brass water works products such as valves, fittings and saddles. Parts enter the rocker barrel through a vibrating shaker conveyor before being blasted and cleaned in a U-shaped drum that gently rocks parts back and forth without the impingement that can occur with other blast wheel machines. The rocker barrel machine is equipped with three low maintenance and easy-service 40-horsepower EZEFIT™ wheels.

Additional features include a dual elevator system designed to meet height restrictions in the existing building. The first elevator feeds the separator and the second elevator feeds the storage hopper.

Mike Jones, Foundry Manager, states, "We are pleased with the results of our Wheelabrator barrel blast machine. It is faster than our previous method, and we are able to run at a higher capacity. Our castings are cleaner, and we greatly reduced the maintenance issues by eliminating the old machine." He continues, "We chose Wheelabrator due to their track record of successful solutions, as well as their capability to meet a very tight and specific delivery and installation deadline for the project." Ford Meter Box and Wheelabrator were able to remove the old equipment and install the new equipment over a 3 day long Labor Day Weekend in September 2004.

Designed for the pre-blast and finishing of many part types, rocker barrel machines can be sized for virtually any foundry application, including small parts that may need a faster finishing time. The machine's cabinet and reclaim hoppers are manufactured with carbon steel plate, and the manganese steel liners are in line with the blast stream. To ease installation, safety and maintenance, all electrical components are pre-wired before delivery; there is an access safety ladder with platform, limit switches on access doors and safety warning signs; and the main control panel has starters, overloads and programming controller with main line disconnect.

Wheelabrator is a registered trademark of Wheelabrator Technologies, Inc.  
 When referring to the Rocker Barrel machine, please use the Wheelabrator® brand name. Wheelabrator products are protected by patents issued and pending in the United States and other countries. Wheelabrator reserves the right to change the specifications referred to in this literature at any time, without prior notice.  
 EZEFIT is a trademark owned by International Surface Preparation Group, Inc. © 2005 Wheelabrator Group