

READ WHAT CONSUMERS ENERGY HAS TO SAY ABOUT USI & DIVERSIFICATION!

Diversification Key to Unconventional Success

Tiffany Klingensmith learned early in her professional career that diversification is key to any successful business. As owner of Unconventional Solutions, she puts that theory to work every day. Her Wixom warehouse and training facility stocks materials to protect equipment, buildings and machinery from abrasion, erosion and corrosion. *"We are always trying to keep up with the trends while finding ways to be innovative," said Klingensmith. "And it's really paid off for us."*

Consumers Energy began working with Unconventional Solutions through the state's Pure Michigan Business Connect (PMBC) program. Unconventional Solutions provides the tape to fix natural gas pipes as well as the coating that prevents corrosion. The PMBC program is helping other businesses connect across the state. Earlier this year Consumers Energy, DTE and state officials announced a plan where the energy providers will each spend \$1.5 billion with Michigan suppliers annually through 2024, for a cumulative Michigan spend of \$15 billion.

The commitment includes Consumers Energy pledging to spend \$2.5 billion with diverse Michigan suppliers over a five-year period. Those include suppliers that are more than half owned by people who are racial minorities, women, military veterans or those who are LGBTQ.

Klingensmith landed two contracts with Consumers Energy that has allowed her to hire five more employees. *"Without that contract there is no way we would've been able to add more employees to bring us up to 12," she said. "It really helped take our business to another level."* Klingensmith said she relishes the opportunity to go out into the field to train Consumers Energy employees how to coat natural gas pipelines so that Consumers Energy can continue to provide reliable and safe service to its customers. *"It's important work," she said, adding she is certified by the National Association for Corrosion Engineers. "I love providing safety to the public, but we are also providing safety to employees as well. It's worked out really well."* She added that the company started out in the automotive sector but made the change to get more involved in the energy sector about a decade ago. *"We really wanted to get involved more with energy and diversify ourselves. We thought it would be the key to having future success," she said. "It was a decision that has worked very well for us."*

Brenda Ruffing, supplier diversity program manager at Consumers Energy, has worked hard to find contractors within Michigan's borders that provide a good fit. *"We want to give Michigan businesses every chance to thrive," said Ruffing. "Our top priority is to help Michigan grow because we are all successful when that happens."* -Thomas Lambert, Consumers Energy



Tiffany Klingensmith
Owner/President of
Unconventional Solutions, Inc.

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December 2019 UPCOMING EVENTS

- Wednesday December 4 - OCC, Bellville, OH
- Friday December 13 - CRCUC/Chicago NACE Boat Cruise, Chicago, IL
(REGISTRATION REQUIRED)
- Wednesday December 25 - **MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!**
- Tuesday December 31 - **NEW YEARS EVE!!!**

January 2020 UPCOMING EVENTS

- Wednesday January 1 - **HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!**
- Tuesday January 7 - Chicago NACE/CRCUC Vendor Day
- Wednesday January 8 - Indiana Corrosion Society
- Thursday January 9 - Western PA Corrosion Committee
- Thursday January 16 - SEMPES Meeting, Dearborn, MI



PLANNING FOR 2020 ALREADY? SO IS USI!!!

Let the USI Team know how we can help you with your 2020 Planning.

SAVE THE DATE
FOR USI'S ANNUAL GOLF OUTINGS
MI - June 12, 2020 • OH - June 19, 2020

CONTRACTORS CORNER

9 Questions to Ask When selecting the Proper Protective Coating for your pipeline

- #1 Is the application above or below ground?
-Above Ground, will it be exposed to UV?
-Below Ground, what is the condition of the back fill?
- #2 Which surface preparations are allowable methods?
-If there is existing coating, will it bond/accept subsequent coatings? Is sandblasting/grinding allowed on site?
- #3 Is the pipe dry or can it be dried?
- #4 What is the diameter of the pipe?
- #5 What is the service temperature of the pipe?
- #6 What are the environmental conditions that will be present during the application?
-Temperature? Relative Humidity? Other?
- #7 Are there irregular shapes or details (flanges, tees) in the pipe?
- #8 Is there an atmospheric transition area from below to above ground level?
-Is additional mechanical protection needed for protection at the freeze/thaw line?
-Is protection needed from lawn mowers/string trimmers?
- #9 Will the coating be applied by maintenance staff or an industrial coating contractor?

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CONTACT THE USI TEAM TODAY! We have an Unconventional Solution for YOU!

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