

# Team Powdercoating Hinckley, Minn.

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The keychain in your pocket, the computer on your desk and even the tag on your pet's collar: All may have passed through Hinckley-based Team Powdercoating's maze of conveyor belts and ovens, where a very fine powder is used to color and cover an array of everyday items.

The process is relatively straightforward: a metal component—typically small enough to be handled by one person—is hung on a 600-foot long overhead conveyor line. It is washed and dried, then moved to a semi-enclosed booth where a worker uses a spray gun to evenly “paint” the piece with powder. From there, it's heated in a 400-degree oven to set the powder.

Team Powdercoating started in the Twin Cities, but moved to Hinckley in 2009 after finding a facility large enough to support its growing operations. Although the move coincided with the recession, Team Powdercoating president Kim Johnson credits programs like JOBZ and support from partners including the Initiative Foundation for helping the company upgrade its machinery and employ more people. Today, millions of components and pieces move through its facility each year.

We went to Hinckley to learn the ins and outs of this powdery process. [IQ](#)

## FUTURE PROJECTIONS

The company currently employs 15 people but expects to add a second shift in 2013 if sale trends continue.

## IT'S ELECTRIC

When you rub a balloon on your shirt and stick it to a wall, it stays there because you created an electrostatic charge. That same concept is how powder adheres to metal. As the powder passes through a spray gun, the turbulence charges it and the metal attracts it like a magnet.

## IN A MATTER OF SECONDS

As the powdered component is heated, the powder turns to liquid for about 11 seconds before it hardens and dries without dripping or streaks.

## MIXING IT UP

Team Powdercoating keeps approximately 600 types of powders in stock. Their properties vary by color, gloss level, texture, ability to resist weather conditions and level of corrosion protection.

## POWDER POWER

There are many different kinds of powder, including polyester, polyurethane and epoxy. Choosing which powder is best for a component depends on its end use, including whether it will be exposed to outdoor weather conditions.



## HERE, FISHY FISHY

They're a big fish in a big pond: The company is the top custom coater of fishing lure components in the U.S. A single employee can powder 5,000 jigs in one hour.

## SEVERAL SECTORS

Team Powdercoating serves companies in the agriculture, medical, retail and technology industries, as well as the military and law enforcement.



## AROUND THE BEND

Team Powdercoating was the first company in the U.S. to master the application of powder-based images to curved metals for commercial use. Now, the company receives orders for images on everything from drum wraps to spoons.

## PERMANENT PRESS

A manual press is used to adhere powder-based images to the metal. The heat and pressure from the press essentially tattoo the image to the item. Unlike paint, it cannot be scratched off or chipped.