



U.S. Small Business
Administration

SUCCESS STORY

New Hampshire DISTRICT

Release Date: February 10, 2021

Release Number: NH-21-08

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'Safety Looks Good on You!'

Industrial Protection Products, Inc. (IPP), located in Salem, NH has been operational since 1977 distributing safety footwear and protective prescription eyewear to many large corporations, municipalities, and utility companies in the Northeast. Top brands and styles from Timberland, Chippewa, Keen and several other popular brands line their 15,000 sq. ft warehouse. Today, the company is under the leadership of Rick Murphy, president, and CEO of Industrial Protection Products. Rick came into the business in 1990 as a Mobile Sales Representative working for his father, Dick Murphy, who founded the company. Over time, IPP shifted its focus from primarily a personal protective equipment (PPE) distributor, to an on-site service provider for occupational footwear and eyewear to differentiate itself from catalog supply houses. The shift that IPP injected into its business model has allowed the company to set itself apart from others in this industry and maintain closer relationships with its customers. IPP has seven 'shoemobiles' that travel all over New England, New York, and New Jersey. These 'shoe stores on wheels' have been convenient and the most popular way to fit and dispense protective footwear to facilities, hospitals and industries that require their employees to wear personal safety equipment. The company found its niche by selling top of the line products with on-site professional service personnel who explain the features and benefits, ensuring the customer has the right combination of a proper fit, the latest style, and the newest technology. Their prescription safety eyewear service also offers on-site service with friendly, efficient licensed opticians that work with the customer to personalize the appropriate product using the latest safety technologies. In 1993, Dick Murphy recognized the need for a professional distributor for fire services and created a sister company, Industrial Protection Services (IPS), which provides and distributes safety protection equipment to local fire departments across New England. This company also provides their services on-site using their pioneered Air-Pak service truck and a fleet of eight vehicles. IPP was looking to expand their business opportunities and grow their business. While still in their original location in Massachusetts they connected with NH's Department of Business and Economic Affairs. They learned about the various programs offered by the State of NH and eventually moved their facility to Salem. This is how they initially heard about the NH Small Business Matchmaker Event and eagerly signed up. Their experience at the Matchmaker event was vital and allied their small business to a room full of government agencies and large prime contractors. With the help from the staff at the NH Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) guiding them through the maze of contracting and subcontracting opportunities with Department of Defense,



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other federal agencies and state and local governments, IPP is well on its way to becoming successful in bidding for government contracts. This event also led the company to developing a relationship with U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). This connection the company made with SBA became very beneficial while trying to navigate the disaster relief programs the agency has been implementing since the Covid-19 disaster.

Throughout the past 11 months IPP had been dealing with the COVID-19 and the uncertainty of the future. IPP received advice and guidance from the SBA regarding the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and information on the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and the EIDL advance. They have been successful using the first draw of PPP to retain their 25 employees and will shortly apply for the 2nd round. They also received funds from the EIDL loan program to help with operating expenses during this uncertain time. “There is no doubt that without the leadership, understanding and support the SBA offered and still offers our company we would have had a more difficult and stressful time navigating their programs,” stated VP of Business Development, Vincent Cicerchia.

IPP has recently inquired about the options for exporting and is exploring working with one of SBA’s resource partners to help them navigate the agency’s exporting assistance programs including State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) and export finance programs. For more information on IPP visit www.ipp4safety.com or check out the YouTube Video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgZZex3CbqY>.

