



Tons of Clay ... to China Fixtures

Company: Peerless Pottery, Inc.

Address: 671 North Lincoln Avenue, Rockport

Telephone: (812) 649-6430

Web site: www.peerlesspottery.com

Founded: 1902

Owner: Fourth generation of Weaver family – Charles Weaver, CEO; Stanley Weaver, president

Number of employees: 146

Service/product:

Producer of bathroom fixtures – including toilet bowls, tanks, lavatories, urinals and other products – for more than 100 years. The company ships between 40,000 and 50,000 products a month from its 350,000-square-foot facility.

Point of pride:

All of the company's raw materials are American made. Steve Rice, vice president of finance and a 24-year veteran of Peerless Pottery: "We're probably the only one of our competitors that can make that claim."

Little known fact:

Peerless Pottery provided numerous fixtures for the 1988 Seoul Olympics when an emphasis was placed on having American products in the Olympic village where athletes stayed.

Current innovation:

Working with an English company on new robot casting machine to pour clay into the mold. Results will be improved efficiency and an easing of the physical strain on the workforce.

Biggest challenge:

Foreign competition, first from Mexico and now from China. Rice: "It's hard to believe they can make and ship pieces from China cheaper than we can make them here. If it's fair trade, we can compete with anybody in the world. But our health insurance per employee is more than what their employees make in a year."

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