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Local & State Headlines

Albany company reaching the region

- An Albany industrial maintenance company has made a huge splash since landing here.

Carlton Fletcher

ALBANY — Not quite three years ago, Findlay, Ohio-based National Maintenance Services sent one of its industrial equipment maintenance crews to Albany to meet the needs of a new client, one of Southwest Georgia's largest manufacturing firms. Demand for NMS services in the region was so great, though, the company has established a permanent location here.

And as word has spread about the rapidly growing independent maintenance provider, businesses in Columbus, Atlanta, Jacksonville, Orlando and other cities throughout the Southeast are making the call to Albany for service that is top-of-the-line in quality at bottom-of-the-line prices.

"We are a one-stop shop," NMS-Albany Manager Blake Lacey, an Albany native, said during a recent conversation. "NMS is an independent company; there are no middle men involved, so there are no markups on parts or service costs.

"We're a certified dealer of top-quality parts, and we can provide maintenance service on any name-brand product. We fit all industrial customers' needs on parts, service and sales."

Development of the Albany plant is just part of National Maintenance Service's phenomenal growth. Started in 2002 largely through the efforts of General Manager Mike Roberts, NMS now operates more than 350 sites in 19 states, Canada and Mexico. In just the past year the company tripled in size.

Among National Maintenance Services' national customers are Owens Corning, Cooper Tire & Rubber Co., Whirlpool Corp., Cequent Towing Products and Alsco Metals.

Lacey, a former standout baseball player at Albany High School, had been involved in forklift and industrial maintenance for years when NMS "found him" and offered him the position managing the Albany facility. His crew of mechanics handles contract and emergency maintenance calls in the region while Lacey spreads the word about the company.

"Once a potential client shows interest in our services, we sit down with them and tailor-fit a program that meets their individual needs," he said. "We help companies maximize productivity, reduce operating



and maintenance costs and eliminate undesired downtime.

“One of our clients realized a \$1 million savings in one year just on parts replacement. Another company had more than 50 forklifts in its inventory, and we showed them how they could do everything they’d been doing more efficiently with only 31 lifts. We’ve also been able to show clients that they were utilizing the wrong kind of equipment for a particular job.”

NMS provides leading industry parts not only at lower prices but on a same-day delivery basis.

“We have a program where we provide our clients with a CD that lists all parts and prices,” Lacey said. “The customer can use the CD to order parts through their computer, and if the order is made before 4 p.m., they’ll get it that day.”

The Albany NMS site, located at 402 Cordele Road, is earning a reputation for service that is recognized companywide. In fact, Lacey frequently has to “loan out” top mechanic Durham Maxwell to NMS facilities in the Carolinas, Florida, Mississippi, Oklahoma, California or other locations.

“When there are maintenance problems that no one can seem to solve, I’ll get a call saying, ‘We need Durham,’ ” Lacey laughs. “The man is the best I’ve ever seen.”

A graduate of Albany Technical College’s Industrial Maintenance and Machine Tool Technology programs who has settled in Lee County (he has two children: Makenzie, 9, and Gavin, 3), Lacey says he’s proud to be associated with National Maintenance Services.

“It’s just a great company,” he said. “When we say we can tailor-fit a program to meet any company’s needs, we mean it. We’re independent; we don’t have a lot of extra costs to pass on to our customers. We deal with them one-on-one.

“Our motto is ‘We do business on a handshake.’ That’s the kind of company you want to be associated with.”

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