



After 10 years as Passaic Rubber Co. president, John H. Mathey (right) has stepped down to be replaced by son J.D. John Mathey will continue as adviser to the firm, slated to undergo several capital expenditures in 2000.

Vulcanizer first among Passaic's new upgrades

By Justin Boyd

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PASSAIC, N.J.—Passaic Rubber Co. is adding an electric vulcanizer to increase its efficiency and provide access to the urethane roller and belt markets.

The company spent between \$50,000 and \$60,000 for the vulcanizer it expects to be operational by the end of the year, said J.D. Mathey, Passaic president and CEO.

The diameter of the vulcanizer is 36 inches and it replaces a 30-inch diameter steam vulcanizer, Mathey said. The larger machine will allow Passaic to vulcanize more large-diameter products at a time, he said.

The new machine provides three important improvements to Passaic, Mathey said.

First, it will allow the belt, roller and calendered rubber maker to pursue urethane products because electric vulcanization is more compatible with urethane than steam, he said. Previously, Passaic used all-steam vulcanization.

Second, it can run overnight without the presence of an operator, Mathey said. According to New Jersey law, steam vulcanizers must have an operator present to avert an explosion if excess pressure builds up in a company's boilers, he said.

Electric operation will allow Passaic to vulcanize products overnight and take advantage of off-peak hours to do it, Mathey said.

It also brings added control during vulcanization and should enable Passaic to ensure closer tolerances, he said.

Passaic could use the vulcanizer to cure its calendered rubber—all of its calendered rubber currently is sold uncured—but no decisions have been made to pursue that market, Mathey said.

Passaic has plans to buy several large pieces of equipment after the new year, he said.

"We're going to be spending a considerable amount this year on capital expenditures," Mathey said. "To meet the expectations of customers, big-ticket capital expenditures are required once in a while."

Mathey, formerly vice president of sales and marketing, recently was promoted to president and CEO of Passaic after his father, John, stepped down following 10 years as president and 30 years with the company.

John Mathey will continue with the company in an advisory capacity.

Passaic will not add space or employees at its 70,000-sq.-ft. plant for the new vulcanizer.