

DISTRIBUTORS IN THE NEWS BY A. LEE CHICHESTER

North Coast Electric acquires Alexanders

North Coast Electric has acquired Alexanders' Contractor Lighting as of early this year. "We wanted to get into the residential and multi-family builder business," said Pete Lemman, president of NCE. "Our business is primarily commercial/industrial, so there isn't a lot of overlap with what the two companies do, making the acquisition a real partnership."

Alexanders' was founded by Phil Alexander in 1994. The company supplies a variety of lighting products for residential and commercial applications, reports revenues of about \$5 million annually, and has run a successful lighting showroom in Ballard, a suburb of Seattle. Twenty-four employees have worked hard to expand the company's influence throughout the Puget Sound and Eastern Washington. "The people at Alexanders' are the driving force behind this acquisition," said Lemman. "They've spent 10 years developing processes in their entire customer segment—a marketplace that we don't currently participate in."

"We're able to envision this, first, at a local-access level here in the Seattle marketplace; then we think we can drive some of their business practices out into our total region," Lemman added.

North Coast Electric is in the top 100 privately held companies in the Puget Sound area, according to the *Puget Sound Journal*. NCE is currently headquartered in Bellvue, Wash., with 26 service centers across the Pacific Northwest, Alaska, and Arizona, and reported revenues of \$205 million in 2003.

Family owned and operated since 1913, NCE is nationally recognized as one of the fastest-growing electrical

distributors in the United States. A key to its success is the company's inventory of quality lines such as Allen-Bradley, Thomas & Betts, Seimans, and others.

The move to consolidate with Alexanders' has been consistent with NCE's market expansion targets. "Recently, we launched a tool division and have been expanding our commercial market division," said Lemman.

With the addition of Alexanders', the company anticipates some changes. "At this point, Alexanders' has outgrown its current space," noted Lemman. "We own a building in the Seattle area that needs a tenant. So we're going to renovate and move them into that building and we're



From left to right: Pete Lemman, president of NCE; Cory McCulloch, NCE Puget Sound group sales manager; Jon Steeb, ACL sales; Phil Alexander, ACL manager; and John Carver, NCE Puget Sound group manager.

hoping it will become a showplace for the lighting/design business in this area.

"In addition, we'll move our corporate offices there. It's a very nice consolidation. We'll be working with Phil Alexander to expand that operation much faster than they could have accomplished on their own."

Alexander and the other minority owners will stay with the company. ■■■

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Granite City Electric teams up with the Sox

NAED member Granite City Electric Supply Company, with 16 locations throughout New England, has partnered with the Boston Red Sox to be its official distributor of electrical supplies.

Starting with the 2004 baseball season, Granite City will supply General Electric lights for the home field, and all electrical materials for Fenway Park. "Our first order was for 550 GE Lamps that are part of relamping the exterior lighting that gives 'daylight' for all night games," said Steve Helle, president of Granite City Electric.

"Our primary goal with the Red Sox



relationship is to develop our brand into one that is recognizable across all New England states. Since the Boston Red Sox is the most recognizable brand for the same audience as ours, primarily 18- to 60-year-old males, we felt a 'co-branding' program was appropriate," he added.

The baseball team agrees. "The Boston Red Sox are proud to be adding another fine New England-based company like Granite City Electric to our corporate partner family," said Joe Januszewski, director of corporate partner-