

# Electro-Ion's Top Product Comes From Old Process

By RICHARD McCULLEN

An old process for "painting" with powder which has been in use in Europe for at least a decade has won a Michigan Week regional "product of the year" award for a Farmington firm.

Electro-Ion, Inc., Farmington Freeway Industrial Park, is now in line with other regional winners in the non-consumer category for the statewide award to be announced this week.

The award-winning product is a system which replaces conventional liquid spray painting methods with a powder-sprayed and baked-on powder. It is cheaper and more durable than liquid paint, and is virtually pollution free in application.

The system sprays tiny particles of whatever coating is desired through a nozzle which gives each particle an electrostatic charge, causing it to stick to the surface where it is then fused by baking at temperatures of around 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Two related features of the powder method make it especially attractive to manufacturers in an environmentally-conscious age, according to company President Fred Jensen.

First, because there are no solvents to evaporate in the baking process as with liquid coatings, powder-sprayed products may be finished with none of the hydrocarbon pollution, which provides headaches for manufacturers seeking to meet federal anti-pollution standards.

And because there is no need for exhaust systems which blow away pollutants and eliminate expensively-produced heat in the process, the powder method uses up to 40 per cent less natural gas in operation.

It was the energy savings which prompted Jensen, Inc., parent company of Electro-Ion, to invest in the powder method, according to its president. Jensen's main product prior to 1971 was industrial furnace equipment, some of which it sold in Europe.

It was there that Jensen encountered Electro-Ion, a Danish company. When Consumers' Power announced in

1970 that its gas supplies to manufacturers would be strictly limited, Jensen began plans to buy Electro-Ion.

Jensen was among the first companies to occupy the industrial park at 10 Mile and Grand River about six years ago. It currently employs some 35 plant, sales and administrative personnel, a number which is expected to grow as business expands.

In its first year, Electro-Ion produced less than \$100,000 in sales, Jensen reports. In 1972, that income doubled, and this year's revenues are expected to approach \$300,000.

Jensen says he is bracing for real growth now that industry is beginning to dis-

cover pollution-saving products like Electro-Ion which have existed for some time.

"It's a lot like the Vankel engine," he remarked. "It was 'invented' years ago but was pushed aside in a corner. Now we're beginning to see the possibilities."

Electro-Ion is the only company in the state which sells powder coating equipment, and only one of about six in the nation. Only one other U.S. company is able to offer an entire system including ovens.

The electrostatic powder process was first used for coating furniture. Jensen foresees among its future customers nearly every industry which produces a finished product, from the auto industry, which is already testing the process for car bodies, to manufacturers of shopping baskets who are replacing metal with vinyl coating which is easier to clean and repels bacteria.

The small company's market area is world-wide, and to facilitate trips to its wide-spread customers, Jensen owns its own six-passenger plane.

There are three pilots in the organization -- the president, chief pilot Joe Frank, and chief engineer Wayne Jewell. The three log as many passenger miles a year as most commercial airlines in pushing its "product of the year," according to Jensen.



THE COMPLETE powder spray system produced at Electro-Ion of Farmington is demonstrated by Kathy Ferguson. The system consists of a power unit; the spray gun, which contains apparatus to charge the particles of coating material; and a specially-designed booth capable of recovering and returning to the unit up to 97 per cent of excess powder.



FRED JENSEN is president of Jensen, Inc. and Electro-Ion of Farmington, winners of the regional Michigan Week product of the year award. (Evert photo)

## Adult Education Catalog Available

U.S. Rep. Marvin Esch (R-Ann Arbor) joined with a bipartisan group of congressmen to introduce a bill to improve opportunities for the 64 million adult Americans who haven't completed their high school education.

Esch said that Congress will emphasize coordination between adult education and manpower training programs in order to have a "coordinated educational system which provides for continuing and updating skills."

"This legislation expresses a new national commitment to provide a second chance for the illiterate, the poorly educated and the adult with yesterday's training for today's jobs," he said.

"Nearly one-third of the adults in this nation have less than a high school education. We must expand the availability of education for this large segment of our population. There is a great demand for more adult education and this legislation will assure that funds and programs are available on a nationwide basis."

**Voted MVP**

**SOD DEPOT**

**FRESH DAILY**  
Now supplying beautiful weed free Merion Blue Grass sod by the yard or truckload. Retail and wholesale.

**IMPORTED Bonsai Trees**  
The Bonsai in Japan is handed down from one generation to another and it is common to see Bonsai plants hundreds of years old. The Bonsai is one of the easiest plants to maintain and with proper care it should give you comfort and pleasure for years.

**LANDSCAPING TIMBER**

4"x6"x8'	6"x6"x8'	6"x8"x8'
\$3.15 ea	\$4.60 ea	\$6.00 ea

**STATUARY**  
Come out and browse through our huge outdoor display. We have everything from bird baths to planters.

**COMPLETE LANDSCAPING SUPPLIES**  
BOULDERS • ROCKS • PEAT • BARK • SAND  
STATUES • RAILROAD TIES

**NOBLES 3 MILE LUMBER**  
29450 W. 8 Mile at Midfield  
DAILY 8-7 SUNDAY 9-4

**QUALIFIED LUMBER SALESMEN TO SERVE YOU**

**PINE CASHWAY**  
FULL LINE LUMBER DEALER

**HOME PICK-UP BONANZA For Bargain Hunters**

**GET YOUR SHARE OF THESE KING SIZE BARGAINS**

**INSTANT REDWOOD FENCING**

Quality California redwood fence for yard or patio.

**REDI-WEAVE**

**WATER REPELLENT TREATED HORIZONTAL PANELS**

• 4x8 SECTION	\$13.25 EA.
• 5x8 SECTION	\$15.75 EA.
• 6x8 SECTION	\$16.75 EA.

C/C

**BAKED ENAMEL ALUMINUM SIDING**

**ALUMINUM SIDING**

NEVER RUSTS  
EASILY APPLIED  
NO PAINTING  
FULLY GUARANTEED

**\$22.95**

100 SQ. FEET WITHOUT BACKER

**\$27.95**

100 SQ. FEET INSULATED BACKER C&C

**ALUMINUM GUTTER**

BAKED ENAMEL 5" K

**\$2.99 EA.**

10' Gutter

**\$2.29 EA.**

10' Downspout

ALL ACCESSORIES IN STOCK

C/C

**NEW! BEAUTIFUL PATTERNED PANELING**

**AFCO**

VINYLOX HARDBOARD

LOW ON BUDGET HIGH ON QUALITY

4x8x1/4

**\$6.95**

10'x4' FLEECE NEW BEYOND

**\$1.49**

C/C

**WOODGRAINED PANELS by ABITIBI**

• COLONIAL HICKORY	• AVOCADO PECAN
• ROSEWOOD	• PREMIUM WALNUT
• BARNWOOD	• DRAFTWOOD BLUE
• SALEM CHERRY	• SONNET OAK
• NANTUCKET MAPLE	• ORCHARD CHERRY

**\$5.19**

4x7 C/C

**\$6.79**

4x8

WOODGRAIN ON HARDBOARD

**MIRROR TILES**

Adds instant beauty to any room. Beautifies and brightens.

12"x12" As Low As **75¢** EA. C&C

**DRY-WALL**

4x8x3/8 4x8x1/2

**\$1.69 \$1.95**

C & C

**OPEN SUNDAY 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M. - OPEN THURS. & FRI. EVENINGS 'TIL 8 P.M. CLOSED MEMORIAL DAY**

**PINE**

West Side Yard

12222 INKSTER RD. 937-9111

Lincoln Park 3255 FORT ST. 386-5177