

Local Builder Frank Dalene Impacts the World

Sometimes, a simple idea can change the world.

By Christopher Smith



Frank Dalene is the owner of Telemark, a local building company, and he has figured out a way to calculate the carbon footprint for every product that exists in the current marketplace.

Mr. Dalene is the first to establish a table, called ICEMAN, by which the amount of carbon gases emitted during the manufacturing process of a product can be measured. Whether it's the creation of a cup of coffee, a pair of sneakers, a car or a box of Cheerios, there is a number which will signify the amount of carbon gas emitted by its creation. Such a number could, should and will influence purchasing decisions made by consumers all over the world.

This table of measurement known as ICEMAN is an acronym for International Carbon Equivalent Mechanism Attributed to Neutrality. What is significant is that it calculates the sum TOTAL of greenhouse gasses emitted through every part of the supply chain.

The final number takes into consideration not only the making of the product, but the making of the materials and components it contains. The final calculation contains the taking of raw material from the ground, the entire manufacturing process as well as the transportation of the product to market.

The ICEMAN index lists the degree of carbon emitted into the atmosphere; 100% being carbon neutral

meaning no carbon at all, to zero per cent which translates as 100% carbon positive. Ironically, when the index number is high, the amount of carbon emitted into the atmosphere is low. Whereas when the number is low, the amount of carbon emissions is high.

Because the ICEMAN index takes into consideration all aspects of the manufacturing and transportation process, it cannot help but engage the interest of a much larger audience and curb emissions from a far wider range of businesses than the current

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U.S. government Cap and Trade approach does. Therefore, ICEMAN is relevant to large industries and the big greenhouse emitters, as well as small businesses.

Small businesses represent 99.7% of all businesses in the U.S. and employ half of all private sector workers. ICEMAN makes it possible for small businesses to implement the controls needed for lower gas emissions, which in a competitive marketplace becomes extremely desirable.

Because ICEMAN is a market driven measurement system (as opposed to a government mandated policy) it harnesses positive market forces while working in harmony with government mandated policies. What does

that mean exactly? The market demands more low carbon products. Therefore, companies that produce goods with low carbon emissions have a competitive edge over those who do not.

Brand loyalty has always been a complex issue and continues to transform. In the past, consumers focused on product quality and price. But the values of the 1950's have morphed. Now, those same consumers, their children and grand-children, find themselves caring about low carbon emissions in the manufacturing and shipping processes and its effect on the environment that their grand-children stand to inherit. If the price difference between two products is only a few pennies, why wouldn't consumers purchase a product that is better for the environment?

As a result, all companies will have to re-examine their manufacturing and shipping processes for carbon inefficiencies. Older facilities will have to adapt to the new regulations, while new plants will be able to capitalize on their low carbon systems and supporting infrastructure. Products that boast a low carbon index value will be considered more desirable and attractive to the consumer.

Unfortunately, not all products will be able to have a carbon neutral footprint. That's why having a measurement system like ICEMAN will be so useful and so important.