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WCRP

Wisconsin Collision Repair Professionals

The Body Shop Advocate

~ WE ALL DO BETTER TOGETHER ~

VISIT WEBSITE

President's Letter – Stronger Together



Last week, my family was among those affected by the severe storms that moved through the Appleton and Menasha area. Like many others, we spent the week cleaning up damage and beginning the road to recovery. While it was a difficult week, it also gave me the opportunity to witness something truly inspiring.

I saw neighbors helping neighbors, complete strangers volunteering their time and equipment, and utility crews working tirelessly around the clock to restore power. It was a powerful reminder that communities are strongest when people come together with a common purpose.

As I reflected on that experience, I couldn't help but think about our collision repair industry.

I thought back to my time as a student, listening to instructors emphasize the ASE Code of Ethics. Throughout my career as a technician and later as a shop manager, I found myself coming back to those principles time and again. Like most of us, I wasn't

perfect, but they served as a constant reminder to do the right thing, especially when the job wasn't easy. That lesson still applies today. Every repair we perform, every customer we serve, and every decision we make shapes the public's perception of our profession.

It's easy to focus on what another shop is doing, but the greatest impact comes from focusing on what we can control. Commit to quality repairs, invest in continuous training, operate with integrity, and always put the customer first. When each of us raises our own standards, we raise the standard of our entire industry.

My challenge to each of you is simple: **Ask yourself what you're doing to strengthen the reputation of collision repair in your community.** Together, we can continue building trust with the public and ensure Wisconsin's collision repair industry remains one that our customers can confidently rely on.

Thank you for your commitment to professionalism and for being part of Wisconsin Collision Repair Professionals.

Ryan Struve

President, WCRP - Wisconsin Collision Repair Professionals

In case you missed this announcement - SAVE THE DATE

2027 WCRP Conference & Trade Show
April 22 & 23, 2027
Holiday Inn & Conference Center, Stevens Point, WI

We heard you and worked to get a more central location for more shops to be able to attend and participate in this training event!

Stay tune for more information as we proceed to give you the trainings you want and deserve - along with our vendors to answer your questions and display their products.

If you have any specific requests for training at this event for your office and technicians, please contact Deb at wcrpinfo@gmail.com or 262.542.7707.





NCS
National Coatings & Supplies

SINGLE SOURCE

Skills USA National Competition
Fox Valley Technical College Announcement

>>> UPDATE: **It's silver, not bronze, for Preston Vandenberg**!

Due to a scoring error at the SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference, Preston moved up one place in Auto Collision Repair Technology. Although we didn't get to celebrate in Atlanta, Preston was surprised with his award while working his job at the **Bergstrom Automotive** Appleton Body Shop on Victory Lane.

"Recognition on the national stage at SkillsUSA helps solidify the confidence that we have in our teaching and our students in the FVTC Automotive Collision Repair and Refinishing programs," says Daniel LaPlant, Auto Collision Repair instructor.

"Preston's hard work and commitment to always learning and improving shows with his medaling against the best of the best in the country."

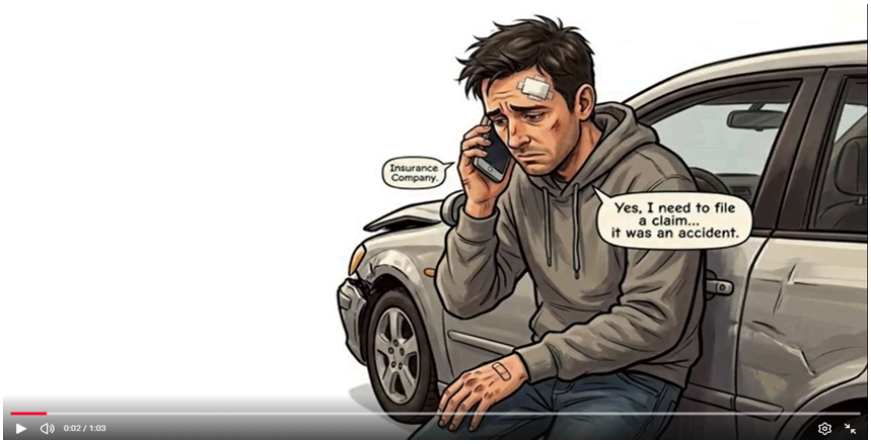
FVTC Transportation



Latest WCRP Video - It's Your Choice to Choose a Shop for Repairs

Click on the image below to take you to our latest video - thank you to Luke Salter, WCRP Board Director for all of your hard work!

Go to our YouTube page for additional videos for your shop:
WCRP YouTube Channel



Here is the last installment on Hail:

Not Every Hail Opportunity Is a Good Opportunity Protecting Your Shop's Reputation During CAT Season

Every major hail storm creates opportunity in the collision repair industry.
Increased car count.
Higher estimate volume.
Expanded repair demand.

But after multiple storm seasons across Wisconsin, one thing becomes very clear:
Not every hail opportunity is a good opportunity.
Some facilities grow stronger after a CAT event.
Others spend months recovering from operational stress, customer frustration, technician burnout, and damaged workflow.
The difference is usually not demand.
It's preparation and discipline.

Volume Can Become Dangerous Quickly

After a major storm, the pressure to capture as much work as possible ramps up fast. Shops begin adding:

- Extra vehicles
- Temporary staff
- Additional estimating
- Offsite storage
- Extended work hours
- Overflow repair volume

At first, this can feel productive. But once communication slows down, parking becomes disorganized, supplements stack up, or delivery expectations start slipping, the entire operation can become difficult to control. We've seen facilities become overwhelmed not because they lacked repair ability—but because the operational side expanded faster than the systems supporting it.

Existing Customers Still Need Attention

One of the biggest risks during CAT season is unintentionally neglecting your normal customer base. Collision repairs don't stop because a hail storm happened. Neither do DRP expectations.
If:

- cycle times increase dramatically
- communication becomes inconsistent
- parking lots become chaotic
- deliveries start getting delayed - your customers notice quickly

Insurance partners notice too.That's why protecting the core business should remain a priority even while managing increased hail volume.

Technician Oversight Matters More During Storm Season

As hail volume increases, many facilities bring in temporary labor or expand technician capacity rapidly. There's nothing inherently wrong with scaling during a CAT event. But quality control systems have to scale with it. Without proper oversight, facilities can run into:

- inconsistent repair quality
- missed damage
- delivery issues
- repaint situations
- customer dissatisfaction
- costly rework later

Fast growth without structure creates risk

The most successful storm operations usually stay disciplined with:

- lighting standards
- QC procedures
- repair verification
- technician accountability
- organized scheduling

Short-Term Decisions Can Create Long-Term Reputation Damage

During storm season, customers remember far more than just the repair itself. They remember:

- communication
- organization
- professionalism
- cleanliness
- delivery experience
- how problems were handled

The reality is that a hail storm may last a few weeks. But reputation impact can last much longer. Facilities that stay organized and transparent during high-pressure periods often strengthen customer trust long after the storm season ends.

Sustainable Growth Is Usually the Better Strategy

The most successful CAT operations are not always the ones with the largest volume. Often, they are the facilities that:

- stay operationally disciplined

- scale carefully
- communicate consistently
- protect repair quality
- maintain strong partnerships
- avoid overcommitting

In our experience, sustainable growth almost always outperforms chaotic growth over the long term.

Final Thoughts

Hail season creates real opportunity for repair facilities across Wisconsin. But long-term success during catastrophic events usually comes down to balance:

- Growth without operational collapse
- Speed without sacrificing quality
- Increased volume without damaging reputation

At Dent Clinic, we believe the strongest hail programs are built around organization, communication, repair quality, and long-term relationships—not simply maximizing short-term volume.

Stay safe this storm season, Wisconsin.

Austin Henneberry
President, Dent Clinic Inc.
Serving Wisconsin Since 1993
Auto Hail Repair • Paintless Dent Repair • Catastrophic Hail Support

www.DoorDing911.com
262-785-9595
info@DoorDing911.com



DaveLuehr's ELITE BODY SHOP SOLUTIONS

The 8th Annual Positivity Summit

Friday, February 5, 9:00am - 4:00pm (CST)

The Edge of Opportunity: New Challenges. New Thinking. New Breakthroughs!

It's time for the 8th Annual Positivity Summit. The collision industry's largest virtual event! 🚀 Come and experience 40+ inspiring speakers over 7 hours of actionable ideas, fresh mindset shifts, and contagious positivity designed to help you thrive through change.

This one-day movement will challenge what's possible for you, your business, and our industry—as long as you are willing to see it through a different lens.



Coming together is a beginning,
staying together is progress,
& working together is success.

--Henry Ford--





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NITROX

Wisconsin Automobile and Truck Dealers Foundation









This week, we wrapped up our final two **Nitro-X middle school camps**, and I wanted to share a few highlights of the next generation of talent in action.

Ages 11 to 14 are the critical formulation years for career choice. By introducing these students to **automotive, collision, and diesel** early, we are actively solving tomorrow's technician shortage today. Over an intensive week, these young learners didn't just play with remote-controlled cars they built real-world skills, gained hands-on technical exposure, and developed a genuine passion for the transportation trades.

As industry leaders, you know how vital a strong talent pipeline is. These camps are where that pipeline begins. We are proud to cultivate the future technicians, service advisors, and leaders who will keep your bays full and your businesses moving forward.

Thank you for your continued support and helping build:

- The long-term talent pipeline
- Investing in communities across Wisconsin
- Helping young people (and parents) realize all the possibilities in these noble career pathways

With Appreciation,

Brent Kindred

Vice President
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The FOUNDATION
OF THE WISCONSIN AUTOMOBILE & TRUCK DEALERS ASSOCIATION

CARS Cooperative

CARS Cooperative will email the link to members to participate in the Money Monday session a couple of days before and the day of - watch your email!



"Ability
is what you're capable of doing.
Motivation
determines what you do.
Attitude
determines how well you do it."

Lou Holtz

RDN REPAIRER DRIVEN NEWS

Repairer Driven Education @ The SEMA Show

November 3 @ 12:00 pm - November 6 @ 8:00 pm

The SEMA Show offers an attendee experience like no other trade show on the planet. It's the best place to see thousands of the newest automotive performance products from new and iconic exhibitors, discover the latest product and vehicle trends, and develop essential skills by attending any one of the 99+ free education sessions – all of which are led by top industry professionals.

acuity™ INSURANCE

Why Become a WCRP Board Member?

One of the most significant benefits of being a board member is the opportunity to drive positive change. Board members help shape policy, approve budgets, network, and add unique perspectives to the table. It is your opportunity to contribute while growing both personally and professionally.



Email wcrpinfo@gmail.com for more information



Don't forget to use this resource for your shop!

The Auto Collision Repair Industry Standard for Measuring & Reporting Market Labor Rates

Labor Rate Hero

THANK YOU SPONSORS!

PLEASE SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT US!!!

GANDRUD Chevrolet

CHEVROLET Experience the Difference

NCS National Coatings & Supplies | SINGLE SOURCE

Need to update your "FIND A SHOP" listing on the WCRP website? Check here..







Please consider being a sponsor for WCRP! Our Body Shop Advocate e-newsletter is sent out every month to over 550 addresses.
YOUR TARGET MARKET!
Click here for information!

KNOW OF ANY SHOPS LOOKING TO JOIN WCRP?
Forward this newsletter to them! They can click **here** to go straight to the membership form or they can call Deb at 262-542-7707.

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Please join us for the full benefits of membership.
Applications can be found here.
Guest editorials and other submissions are the opinions of the author and may not reflect those of the organization.

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