

# American News

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Compiled by Fastener World Inc.

## Fastener Industry Scores Win in Trade 'War' with China

The U.S. fastener industry breathed a collective sigh of relief when steel and iron nuts (HS code 73181600) were excluded from a list of Chinese products subject to a 25% tariff by the Trump administration under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974. The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) released a revised list of products imported from China that will be subject to additional tariffs as part of the U.S. response to China's trade practices related to technology and intellectual property. The list of products covers 1,102 separate U.S. tariff lines that include industries such as aerospace, information and communications technology, robotics, industrial machinery, new materials, and automobiles, according to USTR.

Implementation of the "301" tariffs follows a trade threat made by President Donald Trump in March. The threat prompted negotiations between the world's two largest economies, but China indicated that any deals made during that time are now nullified. "The United States has kept changing its mind and now launched a trade war," China's Commerce Ministry said in a statement. "We will immediately launch tariff measures that will match the scale and intensity of those launched by the United States."

The U.S. fastener industry is already grappling with uncertainties surrounding the 25% tariff on steel imports and 10% tariff on aluminum imports that Trump abruptly announced in March. The metals tariffs are often referred to as "232" tariffs because the applicable metals have been deemed to "threaten to impair the national security," as defined by Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962.

The Industrial Fasteners Institute's Washington representative Jennifer Baker Reid said that U.S. fastener manufacturers are bracing for the fallout from the 232 tariffs. "Raw material prices and lead times were already increasing (25%-40%)," Reid said. "This will make matters worse."

Canada, Mexico and the EU have all pledged retaliatory tariffs on U.S. products.



## Exclusion Process 'Broken'

U.S. fastener manufacturers have been applying for product exclusions from the Commerce Department.

So far, more than 21,000 exclusions requests from 300 companies have been filed, though only several hundred have been made available for public comment. Once public, domestic steel manufacturers have 30 days to file an objection.

Reid said the Commerce Department was already overwhelmed by the exclusion requests, which will only increase now that the 232 tariffs apply to Canada, Mexico, and the EU. Commerce Department officials expect the number of applications to reach 40,000. "The process is broken, it has been overloaded, and that is only going to get worse," Reid said. So far, no IFI members have received exclusions, those some have applied for them.

Meanwhile, domestic steel prices will continue to rise while Commerce grapples with an administrative process that requires companies to file a separate request for each product they want excluded from the tariffs. The last time the U.S. imposed steel tariffs in 2002, more than 200,000 manufacturing jobs were lost. The consequences of these 232 steel tariffs could be even worse for U.S. companies as the 2002 tariffs were not applied to Canada and Mexico. Unlike the 2002 tariffs, the 232 process doesn't have a time limit, which places it totally at the President's discretion, Reid noted. "This administration is very hard to predict," Reid stated.

## More Than Weight Involved in Lightweight Fastener Design

"Weight is critical," Mike Mowins said in a presentation on "Lightweight Fastener Design," for aerospace and automotive fasteners, but also, "strength is critical." "Light and robust," the president of Phillips Screw Company described needed fasteners to a 2018 Fastener Fair USA conference. For aerospace there are issues beyond weight and strength: Serviceability, mission critical for the military and aircraft downtime.

Controlling weight involves more than fasteners, but changes in aircraft construction to make planes lighter can require different fasteners, Mowins pointed out. For example, composite honeycomb panels have replaced traditional solid floor panels. The newer floors use blind-side installation and optimized screws.

In automotive CAFE standards and hybrid / electric range make weight more critical. But a continuing issue is strength which is critical for passenger safety. Other fastener issues include maintenance and collision repair as well as assembly speed with lower costs and fewer tool changes. Automotive seat rigid joints are important for safety in automotive seat track joints, Mowins pointed out. Other issues include minimizing track height and weight, maintaining head strength while still meeting required torque for clamp load.



Automakers need improved tool life for assembly lines, less line stoppage and ease of torque monitoring down to the end of the line, Mowins said. After a vehicle is manufactured and sold to a consumer, there is still servicing during the vehicle life and ultimately end of life disassembly, Mowins added.

Factors in weight reduction are minimizing fastener diameter through material strength and minimizing fastener head height for weight, Mowins noted. Extending endurance is a joint design issue.

A sample solution by fastener engineers: Lightweight low profile head fastener made of titanium mated with bonded CFRP nut plate.

Mowins cited external Mortorq high strength spiral drives for aircraft engines. The fasteners reduce weight with lower head height through an optimized drive system. The lower head replaces the traditional 12 pt/bi-hex head. The result is a fastener with 23% less volume, 31% lower height, 1.2x more drive contact and 2.2x more removal contact, Mowins demonstrated.

## IFI Names Walker as 8th Managing Director



Dan Walker, PE, will be the new managing director of the Industrial Fasteners Institute. Walker will officially join the IFI in August 2018. He has been vice president of Thomas Associates Inc. of Cleveland since 2015 and held a variety of engineering and administrative roles with Thomas since 1996. The roles include being general manager of the Metal Building Manufacturers Association; executive director of the Concrete & Masonry Anchor Manufacturers Association; technical director with National Sunroom Association; senior account executive; senior engineer of technical services; and staff engineer. Walker has experience managing technology and research projects, codes, membership recruitment and retention, strategic planning, budgeting and safety education. Walker succeeds Rob Harris, managing director from 1995 through 2017.

## Kerr Lakeside Marks 70th Anniversary



Kerr Lakeside Inc. is marking its 70th anniversary in the fastener business.

Charles L. Kerr had organized Kraflin Industries Inc. in 1945 to manufacture a military fastener.

The company went dormant after WWII. In 1947, Gus LaGanke, Kerr and other associates renamed it C.L. Kerr Industries Inc. Lakeside Machine Products was organized in 1943 to operate a Browne & Sharpe automatic screw machine plant. The two companies purchased and resold each other's products, leading to the merger. Kerr Lakeside remains a family run company that is now managed by the third and fourth generations.

Under the leadership of current president Charles Kerr II, Kerr Lakeside now manufactures socket screw products, precision turned and cold headed components in a 150,000 sq ft facility. Alex Kerr – representing the fourth generation of the Kerr family – is now vice president and general manager.

## PPG Announces 6% Price Increases on North American Coatings



PPG announced price increases of up to 6% on all industrial coatings technologies in North America.

PPG vice president for industrial coatings Kevin Braun said continued increasing cost pressures from raw materials and labor drove the price hikes. The change is effective July 1, 2018, and applies to all industrial coatings end-use segments.

Pittsburgh-headquartered PPG has been developing and delivering paints, coatings and materials for 130 years and today operates in 70 countries. PPG 2017 sales totaled \$14.8 billion. The PPG markets include construction, consumer products, industrial and transportation markets and aftermarkets.

## American Ring Acquires Assets of S&M Retaining Ring



American Ring, Solon, OH, USA, a family owned and operated manufacturer and supplier of retaining rings, snap rings and Belleville disc springs,

has acquired all tooling, dies, equipment and intellectual property of S&M Retaining Ring. Founded in 2001 by Michael O'Shea, Sr., S&M Retaining Ring produced tapered section retaining rings, stamped out of carbon spring steel, stainless steel (PH 15-7 MO) and beryllium copper all to the ASME B18.27-1998 and MIL\_DTL 21248 specifications. A gifted tool and die engineer, O'Shea had over 40 years



of experience in the retaining ring industry, having worked for Waldes Truar, Rotor Clip and Industrial Retaining Ring. Upon his death in May of 2017, the O'Shea family wished to see his legacy live on, and American Ring is pleased to fulfil that request. With the acquisition of S&M Retaining Ring's tooling, dies, equipment and intellectual property, coupled with American Ring's exceptional engineering capability and customer service, the company said that it is excited about the product offerings it will be able to bring to the marketplace.

## Lawson Products Celebrates Opening of New Distribution Center in Canada

Lawson Products, Inc., Chicago, IL, USA, a distributor of products and services to the MRO marketplace, held an open house to celebrate its new distribution center in Alberta, Canada. The new distribution center, co-located in the recently acquired facility of The Bolt Supply House, allows Lawson to reduce product delivery time to within one to two business days to its western Canadian customers. "Our investment in the Alberta Distribution Center is helping to ensure all Lawson Products' customers get the products they need in a timely manner to keep their operations running smoothly," said Michael DeCata, President and CEO. "We have been in Canada since 1984 and we're committed to providing the competitive combination of the right products, reliable service and technical expertise that saves our customers time and money." The 43,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Alberta Distribution Center stocks more than 15,000 items.



## ASTM International Honors Tyler Olson of Fastenal

Tyler Olson, Engineering Mgr., Materials, at Fastenal Co., Winona, MN, USA, recently won the 2018 ASTM International James A. Thomas President's Leadership Award. The award recognizes individuals early in their ASTM career who've significantly advanced ASTM's mission through extraordinary accomplishment. An ASTM member since 2011, Olson was recognized for productivity/exemplary service to the committee on fasteners (F16).



## Ramco Specialties Acquires Copa Tool, Inc.

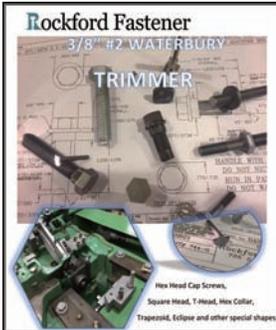
Hudson, OH, USA-based Ramco Specialties, Inc., has acquired Copa Tool, Inc., a precision machining company. Copa manufactures high-volume precision components supporting the automotive markets specializing in powertrain applications. The acquisition of Copa Tool ideally fits into the strategic vision of Ramco Specialties' current and future business model as an engineered solutions service provider to the North American automotive markets.



## Rockford Fastener Adds In-House Trimming Capacity

While Rockford Fastener, Rockford, IL, USA, has always offered trimming services, the company has now purchased a 3/8" Waterbury trimmer to support quicker lead times required in today's competitive market. Trimming configurations now offered by Rockford Fastener include, but are not

limited to, Hex Head Cap Screw, Square Head, T-Head, Rectangle, Trapezoid, Eclipse and many other shapes only limited by imagination.



## Richard Lynch to VP at MacDermid Enthone Industrial Solutions

MacDermid Enthone Industrial Solutions (MEIS), Waterbury, CT, USA, a division of MacDermid Performance Solutions, has promoted Richard Lynch to VP of the Americas. With over 30 years in the business, Lynch brings with him a wealth of experience, expertise and knowledge to the role. Lynch's career has seen him hold a variety of roles in technical, sales and operations—most recently holding the position of Director of Marketing & Business Development at MEIS. Lynch will be responsible for the MEIS business in the Americas, leading the commercial strategy to keep the business at the forefront of the industry, including the ZinKlad® quality assurance program.

## Earnest Machine Adds Domestic Hex Nuts to Product Line

Rocky River, OH, USA-based Earnest Machine now offers domestic hex nuts in response to increased demand for USA-made products. "The federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 requires the use of domestically made products in transit projects that receive more than US\$100,000 in federal money," said Patrick Ginnetti, Marketing Director for Earnest Machine. While domestic nuts are required for federal transit-related projects, Ginnetti noted that they're also specified in many other federally funded projects, such as energy, water works and military. Earnest Machine will carry nine sizes of domestic hex nuts—ranging in size from 1/4" to 7/8"—in fine and coarse threads and a variety of finishes. Ginnetti said the company will also offer a variety of value-added services including custom plating, drilling.



### Petual

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