

# Autowave Ambassadors

## Leaders of the New Business Environment

### Cobb County Collision Center Goes Green with Autowave

*Now the first shop in Georgia to  
spray waterborne refinish system*

In May 2008, Cobb County Collision Center welcomed spring by becoming the first collision repair center in Georgia to make the move from solvent-borne to waterborne paints. The latest refinish technology features lower VOC content that's safer for the environment; it's a perfect fit for businesses seeking greener business practices.

The collision repair center, located in a beautiful state-of-the-art 44,000 square foot facility in Kennesaw, a suburb of Atlanta, repairs all makes and models of cars and attracts customers from the entire northwest metro area. Cobb County Collision has been doing business since 1991, and it is ASE Certified and a Toyota Certified Collision Center.

While collision repair businesses in California are required to switch to waterborne to comply with state regulations for lower VOC emissions, many shops across the country are taking a look at refinishes like Akzo Nobel's Autowave even before a change is mandated. The low VOC content means increased safety for painters and the environment. Shops like Cobb County Collision are also discovering productivity and cost-saving benefits as well. "All the new cars coming in from Toyota and other



manufacturers feature waterborne finishes right out of the factory. And it's a better choice for the environment," said Chris Rath, Collision Repair Center Director for Cobb County Collision. "It simply makes sense for us to spray waterborne now, there's no reason to wait."

### Planning Ahead for Waterborne

As a user of Akzo Nobel's Sikkens brand system for the past eight years, Rath worked closely with the coatings manufacturer to plan for the move to waterborne coatings. In fact, the new facility was designed with the assistance of Akzo Nobel's facility design and layout team, and the production area features a Global downdraft heat paint booth specially equipped for spraying waterborne.

### Akzo Nobel's Waterborne Basecoat System

With global commitment to the environment at an all-time high, Akzo Nobel's Sikkens offers the very best waterborne refinish system on the market.

In extensive tests with comparable products, the Sikkens system has proven to have excellent color accuracy, ease of application, good covering power, fade-out and cost effectiveness.





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**–Chris Raft**



After Cobb County Collision’s 23-employee team settled into its new and improved surroundings, Rath visited Akzo Nobel’s Collision Repair Instruction Center in Norcross to take a closer look at the Autowave product. Autowave is the premier waterborne system developed in the early 1990s, and shops in Europe have used it very successfully since then.

Rath was very impressed by the ease of application that he saw in demonstrations, and he ordered Autowave for the shop. “Once the product arrived, we scheduled some time with our representative for training. All of our painters found it was easy to learn and easy to spray.”

### **Autowave Performs Flawlessly**

The performance of Autowave has left even the most experienced painters amazed. ‘It’s very blendable, doesn’t leave any tones, and blends in spectacularly with the original finish. Even color matches seem to work better with waterborne.’ Akzo Nobel offers more than 34,000 color matches, and an online system helps you make the right match.

Painters were also impressed with the ease of working with metallics. A spot repair, located in the center of the hood, put the product to the test. The waterborne seemed to meld right into the original finish. The repair was flawless.”

### **Saves Production Time, Lowers Utility Costs**

Rath says that Autowave has helped to cut production time by 30-40% because the wet-on-wet process means less time is required for drying between coats. “In the new spray booth using the waterborne system, we expect to see our utility bills cut by 30-40% as well.” Rath says that Cobb County Collision repairs approximately 50 cars a week, or 200 a month, so the added productivity and savings in utility costs should have a dramatic impact on the bottom line.

### **Customers Love “Green”**

According to Rath, Cobb Collision Repair customers are pleased the business is adopting greener practices that are safer for the community. Many have read that almost every new car coming from the factory features waterborne coatings these days, so they are very comfortable with the idea and the refinish quality.

Recently, Rath says the shop added a statement about its move to waterborne to its telephone “hold” message and is planning an expanded communications campaign to educate its customers about the benefits of waterborne.

“We like everything we’ve seen about Autowave, from its ease of application to the resulting finish,” said Rath. “And it’s a good feeling to know we’ve made a change that’s positive for the environment.



*Sikkens car refinishes are designed for professional use only.*

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