



STIHL Inc. Celebrates 40 Years of Manufacturing in the United States

In 2014, STIHL Inc. is celebrating 40 years of manufacturing in the United States. Founded in 1974 by Andreas Stihl AG & Co. KG, Waiblingen, Germany, STIHL Inc. began with less than 50 people assembling one model of chain saw. It has grown to 1,900 employees in Virginia Beach (with 200 more employees in branch locations) building more than 70 different models and more than 275 model variations in the U.S.

STIHL Inc. manufactures chain saws, grass and weed trimmers, leaf blowers, hedge trimmers, edgers, extended-length hedge trimmers, pole pruners, brushcutters, earth augers, wood-boring drills, monofilament trimmer line, and chain saw guide bars.

Located in Virginia Beach, Va., STIHL Inc., the headquarters for U.S. operations for the worldwide STIHL Group, exports to more than 90 countries around the world; and the majority of STIHL powerheads sold in America are also built in America.*

The company, which originally operated out of only 20,000 square feet of rented space, now boasts more than 2.4-million square feet (under roof) of building space nationwide (2 million of which is located in Virginia Beach). The company has 150 total acres of property in Virginia Beach (180 nationwide).

Distribution is exclusive to six independent U.S. distributors and six STIHL-owned marketing and distribution centers that sell STIHL products to a nationwide network of 8,500 servicing retail dealers.

STIHL is the only gasoline-powered chain saw manufacturer in the world that designs and manufactures its own saw

chain (in Switzerland) and guide bars, with the newest guide bar manufacturing facility in Virginia Beach. STIHL products are protected by more than 1,000 patents.

STIHL “firsts” include:

- Automatic chain oiling
- Centrifugal clutch
- Chain braking system
- Electronic ignition system
- Single-lever Master Control Lever
- Anti-vibration system
- Quick Chain Adjuster (QCA) system
- Side-access chain adjustment
- ElastoStart system
- Ematic System
- World’s quietest, gasoline-powered chain saw (at the time, 1996)
- Auger brake
- STIHL Easy2Start dual-spring starting mechanism
- Dual chain braking system
- Intelligent Engine Management (IEM)
- STIHL M-Tronic
- World’s first electronically controlled fuel-injection system on handheld outdoor power equipment

**A majority of STIHL powerheads are built in the United States from domestic and foreign parts and components.*

Information provided by STIHL Inc.

All photos provided by STIHL Inc.

Timeline



1974

STIHL began manufacturing in the U.S. with the 015 chain saw.



1977

STIHL Inc. broke ground for Manufacturing Plant I and Administrative Offices.

1980

Crankshaft, Heat Treating and Polymer departments added.

1982

In-house injection molding developed.



1985

STIHL Inc. launched the STIHL TIMBERSPORTS series on ABC/ESPN.

1989

Production expanded to include trimmers, specifically FS 36, FS 40 and FS 44 models.



1992

Fred Whyte (above) named president of STIHL Inc.

1993

Production of the 029, 039, and 009 MiniBoss chain saws; HS 72, 74 & 76 hedge trimmers and FC 72 edger.

1995

STIHL Inc. achieved globally recognized ISO 9001 registration for quality.

2000

STIHL Inc. awarded U.S. Senate Productivity Medallion of Excellence. STIHLUSA.com launched.

2002

U.S. Production of 4180 (4-MIX) series engine began.

2004

STIHL Inc. recognized with Governor's Environmental Excellence Award (Silver) and inaugural Virginia Shingo Prize by Virginia Manufacturers Association.



2007

Hans Peter Stihl (above right), son of STIHL founder, Andreas Stihl, dedicated a 60,000-square-foot guide bar production plant, marking the first time guide bars are manufactured in the U.S.

2009

STIHL Inc. started producing the majority of all STIHL powerheads worldwide. STIHL became the number one selling brand in America*.



2012

STIHL Inc. produced its 50-millionth powerhead.



2012

Acting Secretary Rebecca Blank (above right) selected STIHL Inc. as site to announce the Make it in America Challenge, a \$40-million initiative to accelerate the trend of insourcing.

2013

STIHL Inc. receives Association for Manufacturing Excellence award.

2014

Celebrating 40 years built in America**.

* "Number one selling brand" is based on syndicated Irwin Broh Research, as well as independent consumer research of 2009-2013 U.S. sales and market share data for the gasoline-powered hand-held outdoor power equipment category combined sales to consumers and commercial landscapers.

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