



## **Anthony Forest Products Earns Its Sixth SHARP Award News Release**

**By SPARKY NEWSOME**  
**Editor, *The News-Reporter***  
**Washington, GA**

Anthony Forest Products' laminating plant here in Washington, Georgia has achieved an elite status with the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for which it was recognized last week during a plant-wide celebration ceremony and catered lunch.

With local, state, and even national dignitaries on hand for the presentation, Anthony Forest Products received OSHA's Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) award from Paula O. White, Director, Directorate of Cooperative and State Programs for OSHA. SHARP recognizes small business employers who operate an exemplary safety and health management system.

The Washington plant is one of only 11 in the state of Georgia to be SHARP certified and with the award, Anthony Forest Products, headquartered in El Dorado, Ark., has obtained SHARP status at all six of its facilities, including sawmills in Atlanta, Texas, and Urbana, Ark.; chip mills in Plain Dealing, La., and Troup, Texas; and another laminating plant in El Dorado.

It is the only wood products plant in Georgia to achieve the SHARP status, according to Anthony President and CEO Aubra Anthony.

"We're really proud of this plant and this community," Anthony said in speaking to the Washington employees at the celebration. "The quality of the product coming out of here and the productivity that has been achieved makes us competitive in the marketplace and that means we get to keep jobs." Anthony Forest Products (AFP) employs about 75 people in its Washington plant.

"Beyond quality and beyond productivity, something else that is very, very important to our company is your safety," Anthony continued. "We want you to go home every day, safe and sound, to your families and to a happier life.

"What makes such a special success is that it is something we do for each other to take care of one another," he said. "Please don't lose that wisdom. Every minute of every day that you're working here, look out for yourselves and for one another. Be your brothers' and sisters' keeper – it does work."

Plant Manager Warren Newsome welcomed everyone to the celebration and modestly gave credit for the achievement to all the employees who contributed to the team effort. Linda Anthony, Vice President of Human Resources, Safety, and Environment for AFP, called it a “great, great award for all of us” and in acknowledging the team effort, recognized EHS Coordinator/Office Manager Kim Winfrey. Winfrey, in turn, gave credit to and introduced all the company’s top managers.

“I want to thank everyone involved with this process at this plant,” Winfrey said. “Without their support and dedication we could never have achieved this great goal.”

Cindy Coe Laseter, Regional Administrator, Georgia Region 4, OSHA, told plant employees that they are “very fortunate to have a management team that cares about you and that is working hard to make sure that you do go home every day with all your fingers and toes and hearing. It’s a lot of hard work to get this achievement – it’s even harder to keep it,” she said.

And in complimenting the employees and the plant in particular, she said, “I used to inspect places like this all over the Northwest and I can tell you, I’ve never seen floors this clean. Y’all are doing a great job!”

“Anthony Forest Products is clearly committed to protecting the safety and health of its employees and, with today’s award, the company has set an extraordinary example for other U.S. manufacturers,” said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Edwin G. Foulke, Jr. “Anthony Forest Products’ investment in employee safety and health was the right thing to do, and I am certain it will provide great benefits in morale, productivity, and competitiveness.”

AFP saved more than \$1 million from 2001-2006 by working with OSHA’s On-Site Consultation Program. The program is a free consultation service funded largely by OSHA where employers can find out about potential hazards at their worksites, improve their occupational safety and health management systems, and even qualify for a one-year exemption from routine OSHA inspections.

“OSHA’s On-Site Consultation Program was very helpful to us with employee monitoring throughout the plant,” Winfrey said. “Engineered improvements were made in each department as a result of the analyzed data. All of the on-site consultation representatives were very thorough, helpful, and knowledgeable of all the issues during the process.”

Anthony Forest Products, a family-owned business founded in 1916, has approximately 450 employees. Washington’s laminating plant has been in production since 1995. Since working with OSHA’s On-site Consultation Program, the plant has logged more than 630,000 work hours with no lost time due to injuries. The facility’s Days Away, Restricted and/or Transferred case rate (DART) was 2.34 in 1998, and is now 0.0.

**“Your achievement is just remarkable,” said White in closing the program. “Anthony Forest Products is the only company nationwide to certify all of its sites SHARP. I challenge you to keep it up and offer my sincere congratulations.”**