



Jennifer, Foam Comfort Inc.

Jennifer and her husband, Dan, own the spray foam business, Foam Comfort Inc. Since starting full-time in 2008, Jennifer has handled the office side of the business. She continues to juggle many roles including marketing and sales, where she works on reading plans and submitting bids for projects.

Tell Us About Yourself

I am a wife and mother of four. Besides running the business, I am passionate about diving, swimming and all things water related. Now that my son has joined the business, it's given me more time to pursue other activities.

Q: How did you get started in the business?

A: My husband and I were originally involved in renovations. We were buying old properties that were tricky to insulate and a building official suggested that we use spray foam. We discovered it was a niche area with only a few companies in the industry. My husband saw lots of future potential so we started a company. We recognized it as a premium product that was essential to the construction process. We started in 2006 with one truck and one employee. Two years later, I came on board. I quit my IT job at a large corporation to join this small entrepreneurial startup. I've never regretted it.

Q: What changes have you seen in the spray industry over the years?

A: The spray industry has made huge safety improvements including more accountability and support. We've seen documentation and quality assurance (QA) go from paper to an online format. Training and product information are more accessible and standardized. When we first started in the business, we thought training was lacking and we knew this would be key to having a quality product and happy customers.

Q: What have you learned over the years in your roles?

A: I learned that there are exceptions to every rule. The product might be the same but there's a lot of building science behind what we do. I always want to keep an open mind to products and solutions. Nowadays, you'll see plans for super efficient homes and the previous methods of building are no longer being done.

Q: What challenges have you faced working in this industry?

A: In 2010, I attended a large spray foam conference and a vendor was handing out pin up calendars to the first 100 people. The calendar giveaways have stopped but as an industry, we need to get away from

these stereotypes and make everyone feel comfortable. I deal with many women contractors and have hired female sprayers. Gender roles are more fluid now and people have more freedom to express themselves. It doesn't matter where the industry used to be, but where it's going - people should feel like there's a place for them if they want it.

Q: How have you seen the industry change for women over the years?

A: We've seen women shine as installers, especially when spraying in difficult places. There are areas that are hard to reach and we're looking at our smallest crew member to go into a crawlspace or an attic. I think it's great to have that variety of people on staff and there's definitely a place for women who are willing to do the work. I also am seeing more women contractors. That's an edge for me.

Q: What advice would you have for women interested in the industry?

A: I would tell women, "Go for it." There is huge potential in this industry. We don't just need sprayers but estimators too. Presently, 50% of homeowners are women and they're supportive of women in trades. There are great opportunities and money to be made.