



David Gold, manager of the Canadian location & his father Ken Gold, manager of the new U.S. location, plan to open in September.

# PURE GOLD

## Canadian Recycler Opens New Facility

**K**en Gold founded Standard Auto Wreckers with three employees in the Toronto suburb of Scarborough, Ontario, in 1979. Back then, he never thought about the United States as a source for salvage vehicles or as a market for his recycled parts.

After about 10 years, he started venturing to auction sales in the Buffalo area and picking up some bargains. A few years later, the bargains were gone when the value of the Canadian dollar dropped. The economic situation improved again a few years ago. Ken was already buying approximately 400 cars a week for the 11-acre facility. It was time to return to the Buffalo auctions.

“Because of security and other factors, it has become a real hassle to get a car across the border the past couple of years. The paper-

work is a nightmare and they charge more tariff if there are more accessories, like an extra \$100 if the car has air conditioning. It has become just too much aggravation,” Ken explained.

In the early 1990s Ken’s son, David, joined him in the business and the two figured a way around the bureaucratic maze. They decided to open a second location in Niagara Falls, on the U.S. side of the border.

Working closely with the State of New York and the City of Niagara Falls, they purchased a 170,000-square-foot building in what has been designated as an Empire Zone. They are eligible for a variety of tax incentives as well as a grant from New York that can be as much as \$100,000 depending on certain factors.

“The new facility is going to be

state-of-the-art,” David said. “We work completely indoors, unaffected by the weather, using the latest fluid-recovery systems and other environmental processes.”

The effort began about three years ago, when Ken and David shared their vision with various government officials in the Niagara Falls and Buffalo area. The officials in Niagara Falls were especially impressed with the Golds’ plan, since they were looking for clean, environmentally-friendly companies to improve the local landscape.

“Anyone walking or driving by this building will have no clue that there’s a complete automotive parts dismantling and recycling operation inside,” David said.

Even though the two Standard Auto Wreckers facilities are less than 100 miles apart, they will be operated as two separate businesses. The Golds learned first-hand about the administrative hassles associated with moving recycled parts across the border and have no plans for trying it again.

Ken and David are generally pleased with the decision to cross the border, but neither anticipated the high amount of paperwork, the slow progress or the cost overruns that they experienced over the past several months.

Plans for the Niagara Falls facility were first announced in February with the building ready for occupancy in late-August, pending a final safety inspection.

“Our hope is to be in business sometime in early- to mid-September,” Ken said. They expect to hire 20 new employees initially and eventually grow to between 75 and 100. ■

BY BERNIE PISCZEK

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