



New laser lightens the workload at Mercersburg's ACS Precision

By **MARCUS RAUHUT** Staff writer

MERCERSBURG -- ACS Precision, along with the Mercersburg Area Chamber of Commerce, cut the ribbon to a new laser Monday morning at its Mercersburg shop.

The 4,000-watt Mitsubishi laser was installed in July and is the largest piece of a \$500,000 capital improvement project at the company.

"This piece of equipment is a big deal for a company our size," said General Manager Charles Daniels. "We'll be able to compete with everybody else because of the technology."

ACS Precision, formerly Spirit Washers, currently employs eight people. Employment at one point peaked at 21, but Daniels said once the economy picks up, he has no doubt the company will return to peak employment.

Two shifts used to clock in at ACS Precision, but Daniels said the new laser is able to cut through metal so quickly that they will remain on a single shift for a while.

The company does fabrication, machining and contract manufacturing work.

One of their largest customers is the

government, including the military and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The company does some work for Letterkenny Army Depot.

ACS Precision operates out of a roughly 12,000-square-foot building just north of Mercersburg.

Charles Daniels and Sandra Tillman-Daniels took over the Spirit Washers business in May 2008. Spirit Washers had been in operation for 16 years prior to that.

"What they've done with this facility is amazing," said L. Michael Ross, president of Franklin County Area Development Corp. "The before and after is remarkable -- how they reorganized it and invested in new equipment."

The laser allows workers to cut thin metals into intricate shapes quickly and precisely. It also frees up a waterjet to focus mainly on fabrication of heavier sheet and plate aluminum and other metals.

In addition to the new laser, ACS Precision, with the support of the Franklin County Area Development Corp., also updated its Web site and added CAD and CAM software packages to make full use of the new technology.

Marcus Rauhut can be reached at mrauhut@publicopinionnews.com or 262-4752.

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