

A DAY ON TOUR AT HI-LIFT'S MANUFACTURING FACILITY

We recently had the opportunity to tour the Hi-Lift factory in Bloomfield, Indiana. The Hi-lift jack company has been around for over 100 years and started out making jacks for the Model A cars. It has since evolved into one of the most recognized accessories seen in the off-highway aftermarket industry today. Having the chance to really see how this remarkably simple yet useful tool is actually made was quite interesting and impressive. We don't often take the time to really understand how the items we rely on while venturing into the wilderness or trails, are made. We just count on them to work for us in our time of need or distress.

One of the neat things about pulling up to the Hi-Lift plant is the 20 ft. jack that sits in their parking lot. A complete replica of the jacks they produce stands proudly out front of the plant in the small town and certainly lets travelers know what the company makes. A subsidiary of Bloomfield Manufacturing, Hi-Lift jacks are not the only thing the company has produced in the last century. The company has made other products and items such as manhole covers and even pineapple grenades - we would suspect during wartime but who knows, they could be for the complaint department too. Comprised of several old brick buildings, the plant stands out as what appears to be one of the historic symbols of the small community and a testament of a simpler time when pride in workmanship and quality meant everything.

Text & Photos by Will Morgan



One would expect to see a huge manufacturing plant that had many different departments working seven days a week, 24 hours a day to keep up the demand for such a popular product. We were as surprised as we were amazed to see how small and tight knit the employees were when we began to tour the property. With a crew of about two dozen employees, Hi-Lift produces all of their components for their jacks on-site, making these 100% "Made in America" which is another great attribute to their products. The steel comes in raw form and the climbing pins, as well as the main section of the jack, are cut and they have machines that punch out the holes in the stock. In addition, they have their own powder coating booths and ovens.

As the tour progressed we met a few of the employees and began to get a sense of how much a family environment and operation the plant seemed to be. Some of the people there have been employed by the company for many years and they even have spouses working side by side. Each employee on the line really takes pride in the workmanship of the item they make or the role they play, and it certainly shows in the finished product.

With approximately a dozen different models of jacks that have been produced over the years, there is surprisingly little difference in the appearance of the progression of the product. The company has a display of the different models that have been made over the years to accommodate the need for jacks from antique vehicles to railroad cars and off-highway enthusiasts alike. In 2005, the company even put out a special edition model in green, the original color of the jack, and produced 2005 of them commemorating their 100th anniversary.

Whether you choose to buy a Hi-Lift jack because it was recommended to you by a friend, coworker, or magazine article or whether it's because they are proudly made in the United States, choosing a Hi-Lift product is a testament to the hard work of the Hi-Lift employees and their century's old manufacturing process.



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