



Erica Libby and Michelle Atherton founded New Form Building Systems in Bucksport, Maine, in December 2004.

Why did you start your business?

We both started the business as owners and at the time were staying home with small children but looking at ways to re-enter the work force. Erica was a chemical engineer and Michelle was a civil engineer so starting a business seemed like a good way to reach our goals without compromising the flexibility needed to care for our growing families. We took advantage of a distributorship opportunity to sell and market insulating concrete forms. As we were both women and Michelle had state DOT experience, we decided to pursue the opportunity to become a DBE certified company and expand our supply offerings to include products and services to meet the needs of heavy/highway contractors. With distribution and sales experience, New Form felt that there was a niche to be filled by offering prime contractors a full array of products and the ability to fulfill DBE goals required on state and federal contracts through supply.

How large is your company?

New Form Building Systems, Inc dba New Form Supply is a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Certified Company and a 100% Women-Owned business that distributes high quality construction materials to residential, commercial and heavy/highway contractors. New Form is DBE certified in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and Maryland. New Form is also certified as a Women Business Enterprise (WBE) in New York, Massachusetts and Maryland. New Form employs three full-time employees including the owners.

What products do you have and what services do you offer?

New Form distributes a variety of construction materials including Insulating Concrete Forms and related accessories, precast concrete products such as box culverts and retaining walls, reinforced concrete piping, HDPE drainage pipe, steel plate arches, precast arches, erosion control materials, stay in place forms for bridge deck construction as well as steel forms. We offer sales, service and technical support for our products. For our heavy/highway contractors, we offer various materials contractors need.

Where are you located and what is your service area?

New Form is located in Bucksport, Maine. We are a master distributor for BuildBlock Insulating Concrete Forms covering the state of Maine and our other products have a further reach. Our current sales area includes New England, NY, and Maryland.



Erica Libby (l) and Michelle Atherton stand in their booth at the recent Construction Expo of Maine.

What do you do in the way of green ?

Most of our products are geared towards the use of concrete, which in itself is considered a green product and a sustainable product. Our Insulating Concrete Forms are a green product as the energy efficiency of the structure can result into a 50% savings on heating and cooling costs.

What new product or processes have you been using?

Insulating Concrete Forms are a relatively new product. Its origins are over in Europe and then in Canada. The product itself has become more widely recognized in the states in the last 10 years or so.

Any tips for surviving in this economy?

As for tips in surviving this economy, that is a hard one. As a small business, we keep a particular eye on our cash flow as well as our expenses. We work very hard to service our contractors and retail dealers. We offer training classes to contractors interested in entering the insulating concrete form industry. We have a dealer installer program which has been successful for us, as well as various retail dealer locations. Being responsive and responsible to our customers and our vendors alike, we have been able to hold our own throughout market fluctuations.

What is the best project you have ever worked on?

Coincidentally, the best project we ever did was one which we were not paid. New Form had the opportunity to act as a sub-contractor on ABC's Extreme Makeover: Home Edition in Athens, Vermont. New Form rallied contractors from Maine and suppliers to complete the insulating concrete form installation and concrete flatwork portion of the project. We had about 30 people plus equipment on site for two days straight to complete the challenge. It was tiring but we are still experiencing the benefits! ■