

TODAY'S A/C

& REFRIGERATION NEWS



Jeff Schlichenmeyer
Publisher

During the month of May, I had the pleasure to interview Ron Fink, President and CEO at RGF® Environmental Group, Inc. I asked Ron the question “How did RGF® Environmental originally get started?” Ron went back to the very beginning and shared with me that the original concept came to fruition when he was in junior high school.

History

RGF® was founded by Ron Fink in 1985 for the purpose of providing the world with the purest air, water, and food without the use of chemicals. Ron’s career interest started in junior high school where he became interested in rocks and minerals, specifically florescent minerals found in a zinc mine near his boyhood home. In 1960 he entered his UV-activated fluorescent mineral collection in a science fair at a local college. After winning the earth science category, he was approached by two well-dressed men in black suits who were intrigued about his project and his interest in radiation. They also questioned his interest after high school. Ron told them that he was planning on joining the military as his family didn’t have a lot of money for college tuition. They gave him a business card and said to contact them when he was a high school senior. The card stated they were D.I.A (Defense Intelligence Agents). Ron later contacted the agency and they offered him a work engineering college study program at the agency’s Nevada Nuclear Test Site, which he accepted. The assignment was at the infamous “Area 51” (and no he did not see any aliens!!) After a few years in the desert testing nuclear weapons and spying on other countries’ nuclear programs, he decided to move to a safer career.

After the DIA experience, Ron entered the commercial nuclear power industry specializing in reactor vessel internals worldwide. In the early 1980s, it became evident that nuclear power might not have a bright future ahead, due in part to all the anti-nuclear protests. In 1984 Ron began to look for a new career. Ron left the nuclear industry as a VP of a Swiss nuclear engineering and construction firm. After studying the science of starting a new business Ron left with 4 concepts. 1) Don’t start a restaurant!!! 2) Start with your own cash, only (don’t borrow money). 3) Find a need and fill it. 4) Be prepared to work ten-hour days, 6 days a week. All were good advice!

The need in Florida, at the time, was groundwater pollution primarily from hydrocarbons, mostly oily surface water runoff. So, RGF’s first project was developing a water

treatment system that removed dangerous hydrocarbons from the water and then purify the water. The water often contained over 200 chemical contaminants that needed to be cleaned and neutralized, so RGF® developed the Ultrasorb® system. Ultrasorb®, along with some traditional technology, was made up of hydrocarbon absorbing media developed by RGF® and high-intensity UV light with catalytic oxidation, Photocatalytic Oxidation (PHI) was developed and patented by RGF®.

In 2010, Sandia National Labs in New Mexico invited Ron Fink along with RGF’s Dr. James Marsden, a prominent food science professor at Kansas State University, to review food sanitation possibilities using PHI. This resulted in a major breakthrough in our food sanitation program which resulted in numerous contracts with major food companies.

In 2005, RGF® purchased a 100-foot Broward motor yacht, “Envision”. It was hauled to a dry dock a few blocks from the



(LtoR) Walter Ellis, Executive Vice President/General Manager, Ron Fink, Founder and CEO, Mathew Charles, Vice President Air Products Division, Tony Julian, Vice President Business Development, Sharon Rinehimer, Executive Vice President/General Counsel

port of Palm Beach, near RGF’s main office/factory. During the next year, RGF® employees gutted the yacht. Every surface was removed including all instrumentation, diesel engines, and generators. The aluminum hull was increased by ten feet bringing the yacht to a total of one hundred and ten feet. The bow was raised by three feet and a bulbous bow was added under the waterline to increase fuel efficiency and stability. Over 50 RGF® Envision product technologies were installed to make Envision “The

World’s First Enviro-Friendly Mega Yacht” as documented by the International Yachting press. All of the work was performed by RGF’s technicians, engineers, and craftsmen. Envision has operated as RGF’s IAQ/R&D marine lab ever since.



Here is just a partial portion of RGF’s Ultraviolet Rock Collection

What’s new at RGF®?

Our first PHI induct unit was developed in 1999, and has been copied by many “Me Too” competitors over the years. RGF® has since sold 5 million PHI-CELL®s all over the world, in a variety of RGF® products, as well as many private label products. RGF® continues to design and create new products using its patented PHI-CELL® technology.



Main entrance to RGF Environmental Group in Palm Beach County, Florida

RGF® has developed an HVAC air filter that depletes radiation, ozone, and nuclear fallout in addition to bacteria, viruses, and mold. Sodium batteries were developed to replace lithium-ion batteries.

There is a continuing effort to expand our in-house capabilities, which reduces dependence on our sub-contractors and vendors. This has enabled us to maintain excellent quality products without increasing our costs and pricing. RGF® is proud of the fact that we have only had one minor price increase in the past ten years.

We are developing five new products at this time. They are in R&D for final testing. We have plans to upgrade our training program and are also developing a national TV advertising program to benefit our HVAC contractor partners.

What are the biggest challenges the company has faced over the past 38 years?

Entering the international market was RGF's first major challenge in the late 1980s. RGF® teamed up with the US State Department's International Marketing Program which entailed vigorous international trade missions directed by the State Department. Ron says he lost count of the countries he visited for US-Trade missions! However, the results are clear RGF® now operates in over 80 countries. The most notable and hard to believe is China, which is now headed up by Sharon Rinehimer, RGF's Executive Vice President / General Counsel.

We first started doing business with China in 2010. We now have offices with 23 Chinese sales professionals and numerous distributors throughout various cities in China. Ron stated we first introduced our PHI technology for China's indoor air quality program in 2010. The ongoing agreement was that RGF® would produce the products in their Florida factory as a "Made in America" product with a photo of a wholesome western family on the box and a very prevalent "Made in America" including the American flag. This is how our Beijing sales office wanted it as American products are preferred in China. We had a recent 1-year halt in China due to the Covid pandemic resulting in the Chinese government's shutdown, but all of our people have returned and are working again. We consider it a real positive that we manufacture in Florida and ship to China. We do not manufacture any products in China and never have!



Manufacturing floor at RGF showing several workstations

By maintaining a totally vertical approach to manufacturing, RGF® was able to work throughout the pandemic with FDA approval as a "necessary supplier". The company went from 160 employees to 650 employees during the pandemic, while maintaining a 1 ½ percent reject rate. Most employees, from the President on down, worked ten-hour days, six to seven days a week for over a year. As our facility was open 24/7, we provided high-potency vitamin intravenous shots for employees to reduce our sick time which worked very well.



Lucidium Class 1+ Clean Room team

The pandemic created a tremendous need for UV lights, as UV is very effective on viruses. This resulted in a strong worldwide demand for UV bulbs, which are utilized in our PHI units. The resulting demand created a worldwide shortage, delays, and substantial price increases. With our mission to be totally vertical in mind, we decided to add a second floor to our warehouse building and dedicate 6600 sq. ft. to a UV bulb manufacturing clean room capable of producing 1000 standard UV bulbs a day under our ISO 9001:2015 certification. We continue our relationship with our outside bulb manufacturers for backup redundancy.



Lucidium Class 1+ Clean Room

Training is an important aspect of our business. We have trained over 9,000 IAQ technicians in the first six months of this year. We gave each technician a REME HALO® air purification system, as it is a great sales tool for the salesperson to say I have one in my home and it works great!

RGF® designed, built, and tested a radiation filter/neutralizer 21 years ago for a multi-billionaire's office in New York after 9/11. He was worried that a tactical nuclear attack may be next. RGF® tested the unit and installed it in his office. Thank God it was never needed for a nuclear attack so RGF® never went into production. Obviously, things have changed in the world, for the worst, and a nuclear attack is of concern! Even a tactical nuclear weapon will create a radiation fallout cloud that could travel around the world with certain weather patterns.

An RGF® research and development project has been in testing for years to combine our ETL/FDA approved state-of-the-art HEPA filtration technologies with Photohydroionization® (PHI) and Bipolar Ionization,



Award-winning 110' Mega Yacht ENVISION with glass bottom hot tub and environmentally friendly engine room

activated carbon, boron, and RGF's proprietary activated zeolite minerals. This provides effective filtration and inactivation of airborne radioactive particles, gases, and ozone.

This project is designed to develop devices for use in homes and commercial establishments to reduce environmental risks. Some of the risks are associated with radioactive fallout that may occur as a result of a natural disaster, a deliberate nuclear attack, or in some locations where radioactivity occurs naturally.

Dr. James Marsden, RGF's Executive Director of Science and Technology, is leading the project in cooperation with the company's engineers. These employees have had extensive nuclear weapon testing and nuclear power generation safety experience. In announcing the project, he stated that "By combining proprietary RGF® air treatment technologies with true HEPA filtration, the risks associated with radioactive fallout can be substantially reduced in homes as well as commercial buildings." Although this may

seem premature, RGF® has always been ahead of the time throughout their entire 38-year history. Better to be safe and prepared than sorry. RGF® has the Microcon-X in-duct system and stand-alone floor models in limited production for field testing.



Special fabrication center to produce components for product assembly

In 2013 and 2018, RGF® purchased two competitor businesses, one in the oil water separation business (AFL) and the other in the FDA approved medical equipment business (BioControls). Both are successful RGF® divisions today. After a diligent effort, in 2020, RGF attained the prestigious ISO9001:2015, an international quality certification.

In summary, RGF® began with a 1000 sq. ft. building in 1985 in Palm Beach County, Florida. It has grown to 220,000 sq. ft. of offices, laboratories, engineering centers, including a 10-acre environmental park known as Envisionland. Also, a 40,000 sq. ft. facility to back up production in Lakeland, Florida, a 110 ft mega yacht research facility, and a sales office in China. RGF® presently manufactures over 500 products with seven divisions based out of our main offices.



Aerial view of RGF

- 1) Offices
- 2) Manufacturing
- 3) Manufacturing & Warehouse
- 4) Fabrication

Sales Offices:
 • RGF Headquarters
 • Beijing, China
 • Toronto, Canada
 • Grand Cayman, CI
 • Baker's Bay, Bahamas

RGF Headquarters - Port of Palm Beach, FL.
 Enterprise 2023