

## **The Aiken Standard**

### **Bridgestone/Firestone recognized by S.C. Chamber**

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A Graniteville manufacturing facility was one of four companies to be honored by the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce during the 2003 Manufacturers Appreciation Night on Saturday. Bridgestone/Firestone South Carolina was one of the four companies recognized with one of the top awards.

Also receiving the awards were SMI Steel South Carolina from Columbia, Charleston Marine Containers Inc. from Charleston and Thyssen Krupp Steel Services from Richburg.

"People success equals business success" is the foundation of the Bridgestone/Firestone business philosophy and is evident in every part of their business," the S.C. Chamber said in a press release about the awards.

"Bridgestone/Firestone South Carolina's strong improvement program in quality, safety and the environment provide benchmarks for all South Carolina businesses to strive," according to the award selection committee.

Bridgestone's quest for quality has earned the plant the QS 9000 certification and the Shingo award for manufacturing excellence.

The world-class manufacturing techniques have distinguished the plant from other facilities in the industry, according to the Chamber.

At Bridgestone the techniques developed in Graniteville have decreased production time by 50 percent, scraps and waste by 72 percent and customer rejection rates by 76.5 percent in the past three years, according to the award documents.

Employee teams at Bridgestone have earned the ISO 14001 certification and membership in the South Carolina Environmental Excellence Program.

"Approximately 46 percent of all waste is recycled for use elsewhere and 100 percent of tire scraps are shredded for highway road projects, playground usage, or other rubber mats.