



AIRGAS BREATHES EASY WITH RUAN PARTNERSHIP.

Just as oxygen is vital to life, Airgas Merchant Gases recognizes the vital role of Ruan in Airgas' expansion as a company.

"We found a partner in Ruan that helps us carry out our vision of being safety-centered and exceeding our customers' expectations," says Tom Thoman, president of Airgas Merchant Gases, an entity under Airgas' corporate structure. "Ruan impressed us with the staff's willingness, at every level of the organization, to understand our business and our customers."

The Ruan-Airgas relationship began in 1992 in Madison, Wisconsin, and grew along with the company. Today more than 85 professional Ruan drivers haul products such as liquid oxygen, nitrogen and argon for a variety of industries from hospitals and water plants to metal fabrication companies and food-freezing facilities. With a fleet of 47 tractors and 59 trailers, Ruan drivers cover nearly 7.3 million miles annually.

FOCUSED ON THEIR BUSINESS

Ruan manages every aspect of Airgas' product transportation to industrial and commercial markets — from equipment to driver recruitment and retention. Because of this, Airgas has discovered just how significantly it could expand its breadth and depth as a company. Not only does Ruan ensure Airgas' industrial, medical, and specialty gases and equipment are delivered safely and on time, the partnership also allows Airgas to focus on its core competencies.

"Ruan frees us to focus on our core business so we don't have to spend resources — such as time or staff — on driver management and retention," says Mike Vandergriff, vice president of distribution, Airgas Merchant Gases.

Airgas recently expanded operations in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and Chester, Virginia. Because of Ruan's understanding of Airgas and its needs, the process was virtually seamless, according to Vandergriff. Ruan already had a maintenance facility, management team and professional driver pool in Chester serving a longtime furniture client. Airgas didn't have a shop or mechanical facilities, so the company partnered with Ruan.

"Chester was a company driver operation and from the very beginning, the Ruan team communicated with the applicant pool and ensured sufficient resources on the ground," says Vandergriff. "Ruan has been an excellent provider with driver and maintenance resources for all our needs, and as expected, we didn't experience any service interruptions."

FLEXIBLE THINKING, AN INNOVATIVE PARTNER

At the Bethlehem location, Ruan, Airgas and Linde, another industrial gas provider and Ruan client, share a maintenance facility and management, forming a unique partnership that suits all entities.

Ruan's flexibility is an asset for Airgas. At a facility in Waukesha, Wisconsin, Airgas struggled to recruit staff. The Ruan team offered assistance, and in a matter of weeks recruited and retained the necessary employees to efficiently operate that site.

"We highly value our Ruan relationships across the board, from John Ruan III's leadership to the professional drivers, terminal managers and operations group," says Vandergriff. "When there are hiccups, Ruan makes it right, and ensures we don't have the same problem again. The service is just excellent."

To learn more about Airgas visit www.airgas.com.