

Meet the family behind Hawkins Electric's 100 years in business

Mar 1, 2018, 1:04pm EST

The company bears the name Hawkins, but since 1972, Hawkins Electric Services Inc. has been owned by the Shatzer family.

“We thought about changing the name over the years,” said Todd Shatzer, current co-owner and executive vice president, “But it was such a well-known name, that we thought, ‘Let’s leave a good thing alone.’”

Todd and his brother, current President and CEO Eric Shatzer, speak fondly of Jay C. “Pop” Hawkins, who founded the company in 1918 with little more than a bicycle and a reputation as an honest man who did good work. Their father, Nevin Shatzer, began working for Pop in the 1950s as a stock boy and spent his entire career with the company. When the opportunity came up in 1972, Nevin purchased the business.

Since its founding, Hawkins Electric has been at the forefront of the industry. In the late 1980s and 1990s, Hawkins Electric was among the first to retrofit commercial buildings for energy-efficient lighting. The business then moved into cell towers, which translated to a contract with the Federal Aviation Administration and National Weather Service. Hawkins Electric was tasked with upgrading the uninterrupted power supply at aircraft control towers and weather radar equipment across the nation. It was also an early adopter of solar power and continues to look to the future with microgrid technology.

The future at Hawkins Electric itself looks bright, too. Currently, Hawkins is contracted to wire two major developments in the D.C. area. And this year Eric’s son, Kyle Shatzer, will graduate from his electrical apprenticeship and join his father, uncle and older brother Andrew in the business.

Aptitude is a necessary component for employees at Hawkins Electric, but attitude is just as important. Above all, Hawkins Electric remains true to its core values, putting employees and customers first. “We feel that happy employees make happy customers,” Todd said. Hawkins Electric thrives on repeat business from builders and building owners in Greater Washington, and some of its customers have been in the books for 50 years.

Hawkins Electric also puts a priority on giving back to the community through their philanthropic efforts, supporting organizations that reflect the values and concerns of their employees.

“What has kept us in business for 100 years is our drive to always do the right thing in any situation,” Todd said. “It is the backbone of what we do.”



The Hawkins leadership team, from left, Chuck White, Mika Hicks, Eric Shatzer and Todd Shatzer

COURTESY HOLLERAN COMMUNICATIONS

Hawkins Electric Services Inc.

FOUNDED IN 1918

Headquarters: Laurel

Description: Electrical installation, construction and maintenance

2017 revenue: Did not disclose

Leadership: Eric Shatzer, CEO; Todd Shatzer, executive vice president

Number of employees: More than 90

Generations: Three