

"IUPAT has been a tremendous partner in giving us the highly trained workforce necessary to successfully complete the job — in a record-breaking time frame."

*John Korfati, Co-owner and President,
Blastech Enterprises*

Location: Between Delaware and New Jersey

Bridge Completion: 1951, with twin span added in 1968

Stripping and Recoating Completion: 2015

Client: Delaware River and Bay Authority

Project Engineer: Gregory G. Pawlowski

Industrial Painting Contractor: Blastech Enterprises

Scope of Work: Completely strip 64 years of lead paint from the entire steel surface of the four 440 ft. high towers and apply a three-coat paint system.

DELAWARE MEMORIAL BRIDGE

Safely removing 145,460 pounds of lead paint. And every obstacle, including an impossible deadline.



Spanning just over 2 miles (11,000 feet), this graceful suspension bridge is a crucial roadway linking Delaware and New Jersey with more than 80,000 vehicles crossing daily. It's also a lasting memorial to the soldiers who gave their lives in World War II, Korea, Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm. Every Veterans Day, a special ceremony is held at the Bridge War Memorial overlooking the Twin Span.

Blastech Enterprises, Inc., an IUPAT industry partner, was selected to completely strip and repaint all four 440 ft suspension bridge towers for the first time since construction was completed in 1951.

The Challenge

Over 125,460 pounds of lead paint had to be removed and disposed of safely. Three coats of new paint, totaling 2,272 gallons, had to be applied in winds reaching over 80 mph, all while protecting both motorists and Blastech's employees. The project was completed in 10 months, which was half the allowed contract time, reducing the traffic impact to motorists.

The Solution

First, a workforce with the advanced skills, training and certifications necessary for this complex and challenging project was assembled. Next, over two months were spent designing and building a state-of-the-art scaffold system, reaching 64-stories to allow the coatings work to be accelerated. Three overhead platforms were also built over the roadway to protect motorists. Over 60 IUPAT members worked on all four towers every day of the week, totaling 68,000 man-hours, to complete the work on budget and months ahead of schedule.

The IUPAT Industry Partner Advantage

The rigorous training and skills of our IUPAT workforce led to unique solutions that made the near-impossible completion schedule possible," says John Korfati, co-owner and president of Blastech Enterprises, a Baltimore-based industrial painting contractor. "And their safety training let us work nonstop without a recordable injury."