

Case Incident 20.1

Due Date: By midnight EST/EDT on the last day of Module 6.

Save the file as your lastname_ci20-1 (e.g., lindbergh_ci20-1.doc or .docx).

Production Problems

Braddock Company of Sea Shore City fabricates stamped metal parts used in the production of wheelbarrows. Braddock fabricates two basic styles of wheelbarrow trays: One is for a deep, four-cubic-foot construction model, and the other is for a shallow, two-cubic-foot homeowner's model. Braddock's process is simple. Raw metal sheets are picked up from inventory (Braddock presently maintains about 7 days' worth of the large metal sheets for the construction model and about 10 days' worth of the smaller sheets for the homeowner's model) and fed into a large machine that bends and shapes the metal into the desired tray. The trays are then inspected and packaged, 10 to a box, for shipping.

In the past few days, Braddock has been experiencing quality problems with both tray styles. Undesirable creases have been forming in the corners following the stamping operation. However, the problem with the construction model tray is more pronounced and appeared almost three full days before it did on the homeowner's model.

Several incidents have occurred at Braddock during the past week that Hal McCarthy, the operations manager, thinks may have a bearing on the problem. Shorty McCune, a machine operator and labor activist, was accused of drinking on the job and released a few days before the problem began. Since his release, Shorty has been seen in and around the plant talking to several other employees. About two weeks ago, Braddock also began receiving raw metal from a new supplier because of an attractive price break.

The only inspection the company performs is the post-fabrication inspection.

Questions

1. What do you think is causing Braddock's problem?
2. Why is the problem more pronounced on the construction model than on the homeowner's model?
3. How can Braddock eliminate its problem?