

## What's the Spatter?

Among the many challenges the metal fabrication industry faces today, cost savings and increasing output top everyone's list. Welding rework, spatter, grinding, welding defects and consumable waste are all symptoms of an unhealthy welding system. Most operations deal with one or more of these issues on a regular basis, but what they don't know is how these seemingly small issues could be costing them big bucks in the long run.

We consulted the experts to figure out the best ways to increase efficiency and in turn save money. Airgas' Rob Tessier, National Director of Advanced Fabrication Technologies, and Eric Klein, Vice President of Manufacturing and Metal Fabrication Markets, share their top five tips to improve weld efficiency:

1. Audit your systems frequently to stay on top of any secondary operations such as spatter removal and grinding that could be eliminated.
2. Be sure your supplier can help you track and analyze your spend data for potential areas of improvement.
3. Double check your welding process to ensure you have the right gases for the job.
4. Consider the quality of the consumables that you're using and make sure they are appropriate for the job you're doing.
5. Focus on the big picture—weld quality, reduced rework, increased output—rather than just purchased product price savings, in order to keep a competitive edge.

Tessier stresses that it is important to look at the business as a whole. Understanding how everything in your welding operation works together will make it easier to identify the biggest areas of potential cost savings. Effectively increasing the efficiency of the entire operation cuts back on secondary operations and rework, leading to a better bottom line.