



Central Storage and Warehouse *Special Award - Service and Quality...Down Cold*

When a devastating fire in 1991 almost destroyed his 45-year-old storage and warehouse business on Madison's East Side, Ken Williams was advised to give up and declare bankruptcy. But he had other ideas. Instead, he rebuilt his facility, expanded and then thrived, never laying off a single employee and cementing the loyalty of his many customers.

Now in business for 70 years, Central Storage and Warehouse attributes its success primarily to the way it treats its employees. The company has always put "family" first; and their definition of family includes their 72 employees working at the company's seven locations around the state. CSW promotes from within whenever possible. Everyone from the chairman of the board to the forklift operator enjoys the same employer-paid healthcare premiums, profit sharing, employer-funded pension program, 401(k) match, and education benefits. And employees at all levels are empowered to ensure that work is completed safely, accurately and in a customer-friendly manner. As a result, employees stay with the company longer, and they know the needs of their long-time customers.

From its beginnings as a produce distribution trucking company in 1947, Central Storage and Warehouse has gradually expanded from one 30,000-square-foot warehouse in Madison, to one of the nation's largest family-owned cold storage providers, with over a **million square feet** of state-of-the-art warehouse and storage space. And just as impressive as the company's family values are its innovative practices. Founder C.J. Williams pioneered the use of the diesel engine for trucking in Wisconsin, and later he was an early adopter of ammonia refrigeration in cold storage.

As the business leadership transitioned to his son Ken Williams, CSW led its competitors in adopting modernized refrigeration systems and computerized warehouse management software. CSW was the first public warehouse to bin and freeze cranberries for Ocean Spray, a process that is now standard industry practice. And with Ken's son Jack now in charge of company facilities, CSW has continued to innovate with computerized refrigeration and electrical demand control, and motion-controlled LED lighting. In 2015, the company installed Wisconsin's largest rooftop solar array, cutting peak electrical use by more than 50 percent. Last year, achieving another first, CSW built a three-story, ultra-cold freezer in Pleasant Prairie, operating at **minus** 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

CSW supports good works through its charitable arm, the C.J. Williams Foundation, as well as many community organizations, including United Way, Concerts on the Square, and Second Harvest Food Bank.

The judges found notable the company's dedication to employees, innovation, its active participation in the communities it serves, and its grit and determination to flourish in both good times and bad.

The judges named this Special Award "**Service and Quality...Down Cold**" and it goes to Central Storage and Warehouse Company, Inc., of Madison.

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