

WELDING ON THE MOVE

Learn how Larry Lands started welding and the on-site services he provides today

As a child, Larry Lands watched his father fabricate and weld race cars. His grandfather was also an automobile welder and mechanic.

"A love for welding and cars was in my blood," Lands said fondly.

He started practicing cutting, brazing, welding, and building skills. After he finished high school, his father and grandfather encouraged him to enter the welding program offered by Arkansas State University. He completed the gas metal arc and gas tungsten arc welding (GTAW) program and was instantly addicted. To further his knowledge, he went to work for a mechanical company, where he learned how to pipe fit and perform shielded metal arc welding (SMAW). Since then, Lands has kept on going and recently became an AWS Certified Welding Inspector (CWI).

Beginning a Business

"I worked very hard as an employee and realized I should be working hard for myself," he said. Larry's Mobile Welding (larrysmobilewelding.com), Lakewood, Colo., was born in 2008 and has grown to handle many projects.

Welding in the Field

Over the years, Lands has encountered many adventures while working in the industry.

"I built my first welding truck and went to the western slopes of Colorado and started chasing oil- and gas-drilling rigs. This is where I got my welding certifications," Lands explained. He enjoyed performing high-pressure oil pipe fabrication using SMAW and cyclone oil rigs invert tank repairs.

"When the rigs slowed down, I came to the city and found a pipeline company to weld for. Pipelining introduced me to the inspection side of the industry, as I oversaw 20 rig welders on a daily basis as a welding boss. I chose to study and learn about welding inspection," he added.

After a few years in the pipeline industry, he felt the need to focus on his business and decided to help local customers with all facets of welding.

Day-to-Day Highlights

"One of the best things about my mobile welding and fabrication business is that every day is different," Lands said. After reviewing his schedule, he sometimes needs to remove or add specialty equipment and material to his truck for specific jobs. His daily work consists of performing certified structural welding on both residential and commercial new construction and remodels, including staircases, handrails, and deck fabrication.

Another rewarding job is fabricating handrails for people in their 70s and 80s. "They are always so appreciative to be able to use stairs safely at their own home," Lands said. He also provides fabrication, installation, and welding services for mechanical system piping and fire system piping, including sprinkler repair. His work can include heavy-equipment and farm machinery repairs; miscellaneous metal fabrication; field and shop repairs of stainless steel, aluminum, and carbon steel; welding stainless steel casing runs for water well pipes; and repairing sulfuric acid tanks.

Larry Lands started a mobile welding business 17 years ago and likes that every workday goes differently.





Lands performs SMAW on a stainless steel casing run for a water well pipe.

Inspection Importance

Initially, Lands wanted to become a CWI to gain education and insight into a less labor-intensive career in the same field. He earned the certification in February 2024.

“My advice for anyone wanting to obtain a CWI [credential] would be to reach out to the local AWS Section as a first step and get involved,” Lands emphasized. A friend and colleague with the AWS Colorado Section, Steve Unrein, introduced him to supportive AWS members. In addition, Dr. Jesse Grantham opened doors at the Welding & Joining Management Group, Frederick, Colo., and allowed him to study for the test there to get real-world help from active CWIs.

“I believe this was the reason I was able to pass the CWI exam on my first attempt. Utilizing all AWS resources and diligently studying are the keys to obtaining CWI success,” Lands said.

Parting Words

The wonderful welding journey Lands has experienced so far would have made his younger self, father, and grandfather proud.

“I do plan to continue my education to get more inspecting certifications so I can start my own inspection company,” Lands said. “I have been able to do a few visual welding inspections for local structural steel companies and very much enjoy the attention to detail required. Being a CWI, I feel, has tremendously made me a better welder and fabricator because I’m looking at it from a different perspective with much more knowledge.” [WJ](#)

“We have had the pleasure of working for some of the most unique locations and places in Colorado and surrounding states, which include the United States Space Force; the Denver Federal Center; the United States Federal Courthouse; and Denver International Airport maintenance companies like Menzies, Delta, and UPS,” Lands said.

His other noteworthy jobs have included working on escalators, repairing a cremation furnace, fabricating framework for fast food restaurants and retail stores, and much more.

Overcoming Obstacles

“As a small mom-and-pop business, with it being just my wife, Jen, and I, the biggest challenge of being on my own is the lack of qualified help,” Lands said. Insurance is expensive, so they generally hire subcontractors if help is needed with larger jobs. Still, they do many jobs on their own by developing ways of completing tasks safely and correctly.

“Other challenges faced are the great costs of trucks, equipment, and specialty tools and consumables. Proper maintenance and care help ensure longevity,” Lands said. They must weigh the pros and cons of purchasing equipment for specific jobs and sometimes turn down jobs because they aren’t financially beneficial.

Lands is shown making a sulfuric acid tank repair.



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