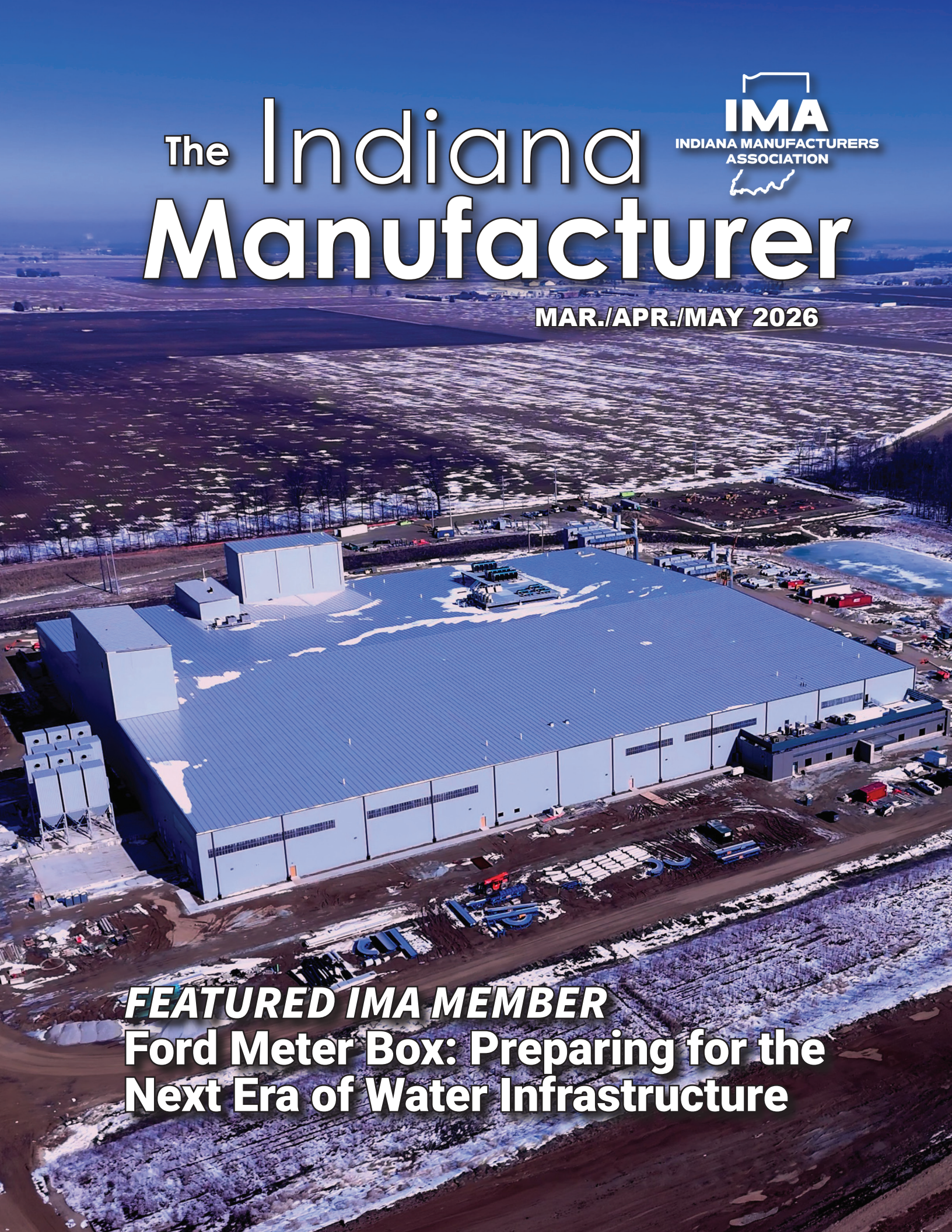
The Indiana Manufacturer

IMA
INDIANA MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

MAR./APR./MAY 2026

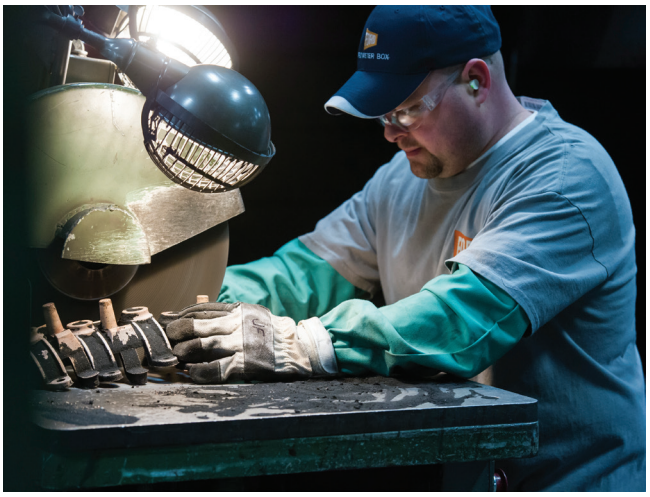


FEATURED IMA MEMBER

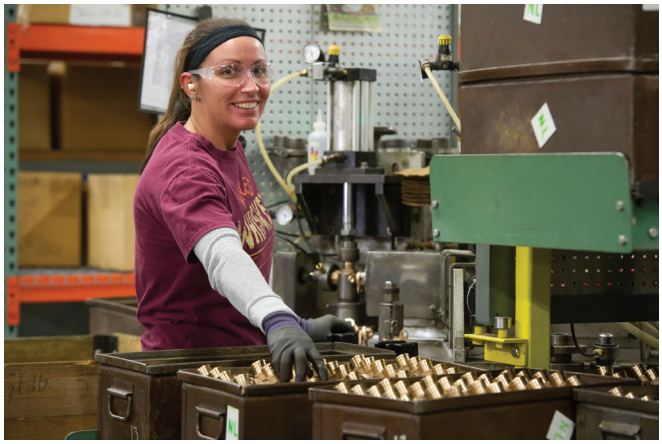
Ford Meter Box: Preparing for the Next Era of Water Infrastructure

Ford Meter Box: Preparing for the Next Era of Water Infrastructure

Water moves through every community via thousands of interconnected components that work quietly and, for the most part, out of sight. While these systems are often taken for granted, their reliability depends on the manufacturers who work every day to produce quality waterworks products. For over 125 years, Ford Meter Box has filled that role, supplying valves, fittings, meter boxes, and pipeline products that support the dependable delivery of clean water across the globe.



The company traces its beginnings to Hartford City, Indiana, where Edwin Ford managed the local water system and saw firsthand the challenges utilities faced in measuring water usage in cold climates. Working from his home, he developed a practical solution to protect water meters from freezing. That early meter box addressed an important need and laid the foundation for a business rooted in problem-solving with quality components. More than a century later, meter boxes remain part of the product offering, complementing a growing line of service line materials.

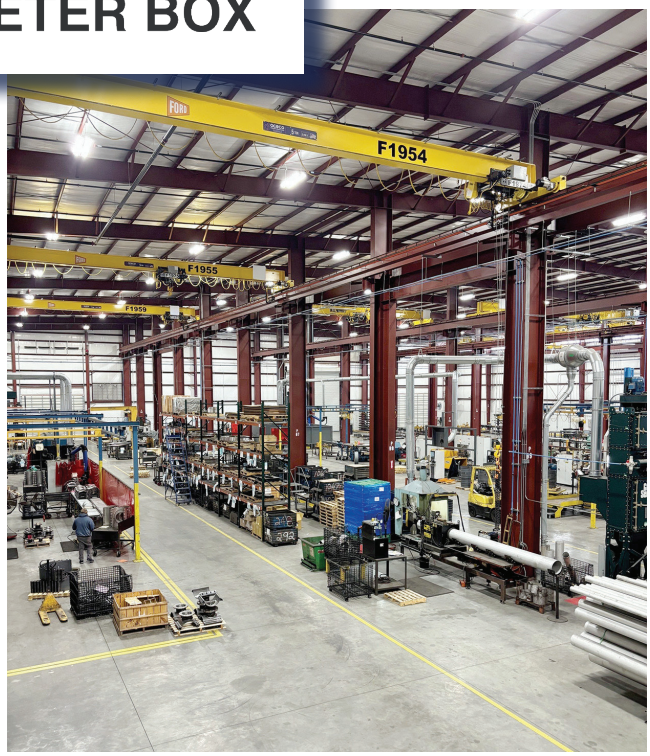


As water systems expanded, so did the demands placed on service line connections. Over time, Ford's product offering expanded to include valves, fittings, and related components, giving utilities greater control and reliability at the point of delivery. This evolution included the development of ball valves, expansion connections, check valves, and other products designed to meet changing system requirements. What began as a single invention gradually expanded into a portfolio supporting nearly every aspect of the water service line, often described as connecting the main to the meter.

That growth shaped the company's manufacturing presence in Indiana. In 1951, operations moved to the present-day Manchester Avenue facility, which became the center of brass casting and machining activity. Over the years, the site was repeatedly expanded and modernized to support increased production needs, reflecting a long-standing commitment to domestic manufacturing and continued reinvestment in the community.

In parallel, capabilities expanded beyond the service line to support broader pipeline applications. A recent addition to this effort was the acquisition of the Baker Coupling Company, which extended manufacturing into large-diameter pipe couplings and related products. This expansion allowed the company to support distribution, transmission, and treatment systems on a larger scale, complementing its established service line products. Alongside operations in Pell City, Alabama, these capabilities broaden the range of infrastructure needs that can be addressed.

FORD METER BOX



Rather than relying on short-term measures, leadership focused on decisions to strengthen long-term stability. Staffing levels were increased, customer service resources were expanded, and sales territories were realigned. Investments were made across manufacturing operations to increase capacity and improve responsiveness as conditions evolved.

Those decisions ultimately led to the construction of a new, purpose-designed brass foundry in Wabash, Indiana. Ground was broken in November 2023 on a facility engineered to support modern manufacturing flow, operational efficiency, and a safe, sustainable working environment. The foundry is scheduled to become operational by the end of 2026, adding significant melting and casting capacity and reinforcing long-term readiness. Together with continued expansion at the Alabama plant, these investments reflect a deliberate effort to prepare for the scale and duration of infrastructure demands ahead.

As water systems across the country continue to age, expand, and evolve, the expectations placed on manufacturers will only increase. A single product or facility does not define the company's role; rather, it is a consistent approach to responsibility, reinvestment, and reliability. With long-term thinking and steady preparation, Ford is positioned to support the next era of water infrastructure, guided by the same practical mindset that has guided its work for generations.