



Service Manager Richard Bellemare (far right) stands by the only factory-authorized Mercedes-Benz body shop crew in all of Quebec – Rive-Sud.

FACTORY-AUTHORIZED: Pros in the Province



In 1980 the Rive-Sud body shop opened up their doors to the South Shore of Montreal. To this day it's the only factory-authorized Mercedes-Benz body shop in the province of Quebec. They're recognized as the best when it comes to servicing Mercedes-Benz, and customers insist that their vehicles be repaired at the Rive-Sud body shop exclusively.

Naturally, a shop of this impeccable caliber only uses BASF products, and it's been that way for 15 years. Glasurit® is the paint of choice for Mercedes-Benz, and the automaker expressly recommends BASF refinish products to its customers. According to Service Manager, Richard Bellemare, "Mercedes-Benz has been using Glasurit waterborne since 2005," he says. "Rive-Sud converted to waterborne long before government regulations were proposed and we were one of the first dealerships in Quebec to do so."

Serious Skills

Bellemare describes Rive-Sud as the only shop in the province with enough skill to duplicate original factory spot welds. They're also the only factory-authorized shop in Quebec allowed to repair aluminum

and magnesium vehicles. "Magnesium is strong and light," says Bellemare. "Specialized training is required to properly repair it." Aluminum is another story. "Dealing with aluminum requires us to wall off separate work areas and use specific tools that must be separated from those used on steel cars."

Occasionally, Bellemare even provides service to customers from New York and Boston. These high-end clients will send him a Maybach to repair or a scratched McLaren SLR to straighten out. Every magnificent Maybach is hand finished using BASF's Glasurit 90-Line waterborne basecoat and a high-performance Glasurit clearcoat.

Continued Excellence

The shop has a grand total of 21 factory-trained employees. There are eight painters, nine body men and four detailers. The shop does about 100 to 110 cars a month. All employees at Rive-Sud are required to stay current by participating in provided training sessions whenever a new technology or product hits the market.

"A BASF technical rep will actually be working with us next week so we can become familiar with the new Glasurit clearcoat," says Bellemare. "BASF works with us hand-in-hand."

His explanation for the continued success of Rive-Sud after all these years? "We have the two best products of their kind, Mercedes-Benz and BASF." He also references the excellent relationship Rive-Sud has had with its jobber. "Our distributor through bodyshopmall.com, A.R.T., is always there to help us with productivity and performance issues, and they utilize BASF's SmartTOOLS™ program," says Bellemare. In an effort to perpetuate and improve on their legacy of excellence, Bellemare plans on introducing a night shift in the near future to reduce waiting time for customers and to increase productivity.

Mercedes-Benz has become a major supplier of vehicles in Quebec, and as the only factory-authorized shop in the province, Rive-Sud is expecting a lot of new work in the future.