

# Golden State Paint & Body Trusts Hunter ADAS Calibration Equipment for Peace of Mind



by Autobody News Staff

Golden State Paint & Body was founded in 1987 in Porterville, CA, by **Dennis Watson Sr.**, after he borrowed \$1,500 from a buddy and his dad's toolbox. Following his vision for his company to "be the best at what we do," he worked hard to build a reputation through high standards and word-of-mouth advertising.

Nearly four decades later, the company has achieved I-CAR Gold Class status and ASE certifications, added a second shop in Tulare, and repairs about 360 vehicles a month. It offers high-quality collision repair services, as well as 24-hour towing and glass tinting and replacement.

It's also a "family affair," according to Dennis' son, **Mike Watson**—he and his three brothers all work for Golden State. Mike is the CFO of the Tulare location, while **Dennis Jr.** manages the Porterville location, **Martin** is a glass technician and **Doug** a body technician.

Mike said he graduated from high school in 1986, and when his dad started the business a year later, he joined.

"My dad decided very early on that we wanted to do repairs that were 'invisible,'" Mike said. "When you have a customer say, 'I can't tell anything ever happened,' that is a joy."

Over the years, the team at Golden State has seen cars evolve. Air conditioning, power windows and backup cameras have gone from pricey options to standard features on even the most basic new car. Now automakers are equipping most new vehicles with ADAS features like automatic emergency braking (AEB), all guided by a slew of cameras and sensors.

"Cars were very simple when we started," Mike said. "Now you have to calibrate. There's more precision on newer cars, they're more technical."

To keep up with those advancements, Golden State has been investing in Hunter Engineering equipment.

Mike said the first product purchased was an alignment machine. Before, Golden State sublet that work to a local dealership. Then the shop purchased a tire



**Golden State Paint & Body Inc. has two locations in Tulare, pictured here, and Porterville, CA. Both use equipment from Hunter Engineering to keep ADAS recalibration work in-house.**

mounting and balancing machine, so it could also start doing that work in-house.

But the "biggest game changer," Mike said, was purchasing Hunter's ADASLink® and DAS 3000 ADAS static calibration tool, which uses built-in cameras and rear wheel-mounted targets to position the fixture, to do that work in-house as well.

Performing some calibrations requires extra space, and a level floor with no metal objects and the right lighting, but Mike said making those adjustments and buying the Hunter ADASLink® and DAS 3000 paid for itself in six months.

"That is the No. 1 best investment I've ever made in collision repair equipment," Mike said.

Any shop that replaces windshields or does alignments as part of the collision repair process needs to recalibrate the cameras and sensors that guide AEB systems every time, Mike said.

Being able to do that work in-house with Hunter's ADASLink® and DAS 3000 saves Golden State money, as it no longer has to pay a third-party provider; saves time, as it can get the work done faster and return the vehicle to the customer sooner; and gives the team peace of mind knowing for sure it was performed correctly.

"Our customers trust us with their car from start to finish, and I want to make sure I know it was done correctly and that car is going to respond the same [as before the collision]," Mike said.

"I had an instance in the past where we took a car to

the dealership, and they said it wouldn't calibrate because a sensor was in the wrong spot," he said. "But we knew it was in the right spot, so we took it to a different dealership, and it calibrated. If a dealership can make a mistake, do you trust them in the future? I trust our guys, who we trained, that they're going to do it correctly.

"You're responsible for your subletters, so if they do it incorrectly, we're still responsible," Mike added.

Mike said his shop in Tulare was the "guinea pig" that got the first Hunter ADASLink® and DAS 3000 in 2021. The Porterville shop sent its recalibration work to Tulare briefly, before the company invested in a second system for that location.

"Both shops also do glass, and we calibrate in-house after each replacement," Mike said. "That keeps the profit in-house, and we have control to make sure that it's done correctly."

Mike said Hunter offers training on all of its equipment, both on-site in shops and in its own training facility.

"The No. 1 thing with Hunter is the service," Mike said. "Any issues at all, I can call, and they will help me figure it out. It's been an amazing relationship.

"I truly do believe if you're going to buy a front-end alignment system, it absolutely makes sense to invest in ADAS calibration, because it needs to be done if it has a forward-facing camera," Mike added.

## Golden State Paint & Body Inc.

Tulare and Porterville, CA  
**559-687-3222**  
gspbinc.com

## Company At A Glance...

**Type:** Collision Repair  
**Facility Employees:** 72  
**In Business Since:** 1987  
**Number of Locations:** Two  
**Combined Production Space:** 80,000 square feet



**Mike Watson, CFO of Golden State Paint & Body's Tulare location, called purchasing Hunter Engineering's ADASLink® and DAS 3000 ADAS static calibration tool the "biggest game changer."**



**The shop's first purchase from Hunter Engineering was an alignment machine.**

## Hunter Engineering Co.

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