

## **Walton Countertops, LLC**

145 South Harvin Street

Sumter, SC 29150

Robert Wade Walton, Jr., Owner

(803)775-2080 Office

The Economic Impact that Walton Countertops, LLC has on the Sumter Community is providing jobs, keeping money in our community to help Sumter's economy, giving generous donations to organizations in our community e.g., churches, baseball teams, schools, SC Troopers Association and helping those in need that come by our office needing help sending children to summer camp and help with electricity bills.

In 1994, Walton Countertops, LLC began its journey in a small cement block work shop behind my house on Eastern School Road in Sumter. In 2010, we moved into a 5,000 square foot metal building on 34 Hauser Street. wondering if our countertop business will perform well enough to afford such a giant step in our eyes at that time. We doubled production and added more jobs. Then in 2015, we moved into a 32,000 square foot building on 145 South Harvin Street in Sumter. I can remember walking in this building when we purchased it and saying to myself, we will never fill this building up with granite. If you come by today, you will see every space is being used in some way or capacity. Once again, we doubled our production and jobs.

Some of Walton Countertops, LLC strategies and practices we have implemented to make our business stand apart from our competition are our premium custom countertop work, our customer service and our ability to correct problems accurately and professionally. We want our customers happy with the service and product they receive. Most of our clients find out about us through word of mouth, so we strive to give that personal touch of good customer service and a professional product to display in their homes.

A challenge that our company has faced over the years is probably the economy. There have been times in the last twenty-five years that sales were not as high as the year before, but we have stayed competitive and true to our customers and continue to provide custom countertops for our customers in the entire state of South Carolina, including Sumter, Manning, Florence, Myrtle Beach, Columbia and Charleston areas to name a few.

Walton Countertops, LLC has always been more than happy to help with worthy causes in our community. I love to hunt and fish, so every year we donate and sponsor a table at the National Wild Turkey Federal dinner that is held once a year in Sumter. We also donate to churches in our community to help sponsor mission trips and have helped several churches renovate their own kitchens. Another organization we help with is the South Carolina Troopers Association. We appreciate our troopers for their service in keeping Sumter safe for our family and neighbors. Walton Countertops has also donated to the Shaw Air Force Base Military Appreciation Picnic for our service men and women, and their families. We are very proud to have Shaw Air Force Base in our community. Finally, we have been a member of the Chamber of Commerce Sumter, South Carolina for ten plus years. We appreciate the work our chamber of commerce does for Sumter community and we plan to be members of your organization for many years to come. Thank you for keeping businesses informed and connected with our community.

The environmental impact our product has on our community is not really a physical impact but one of a financial impact. When we go into our customers homes and improve or upgrade their kitchens and bathrooms, we provide a sound investment in their homes that increases the value of their properties. Over the years, working with real estate companies and building contractors, we have heard that when consumers are shopping for or selling houses, that a beautiful kitchen can close a deal in the housing market. Some methods that our business uses to minimize the environmental footprint on our community are by taking truckloads of excess stone/waste to building suppliers in Sumter where it will be recycled into rock and used as filler and gravel. We are presently transitioning into an all-digital process. This will cut down on paper usage and account for a more precise and efficiently fabricated end product. A water reclamation plan has been started in order to use recycled water to also help the environment. We also have people come by our office asking if they may get small granite pieces to use around their homes e.g., driveways or pet grave stones.

I would like to add that none of Walton Countertops, LLC success would be possible without putting God first in our business. We are blessed beyond words can say and will always give glory to God for where we are today. I would also like to thank my family for standing behind me during the infancy of this company and putting up with all the long and hard hours of work it has taken to make this company work. Thirdly, Walton Countertops could not run smoothly without our commercial sales manager, Layton Watts, and all the hard work and knowledge he brought to our company. I thank my wife, Jill, for her book keeping skills she has used in our company for the last twenty-five years, for my son, Cole, as he takes on a leading role in Walton Countertops after graduating from the University of South Carolina in May of 2018. I want to also thank my brother, Shane Walton, for working with this company wearing many hats for many years and for his service as a Sumter Fire Fighter. Many, many thanks to all the men that work fabricating and installing our custom countertops. I could not do it without this great staff.

Thank you for considering Walton Countertops, LLC as Nominee for Small Business of the Year and remember to come by and see us for all your countertop needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Wade Walton, Jr.', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Wade Walton, Jr., Owner

Walton Countertops, LLC