

by Dr. Kelly Waggener, DMD

Choosing the Right Refiner Can Make a 47% Difference



A second opinion brought this Townie's scrap return from \$3,017 to \$4,450

Like most dentists, I have a small precious metal scrap collection jar in the office, and every summer we send it to a refiner.

This year was a little different: Unannounced, our dental supply representative brought a metal refiner rep to the office and informed us that their two companies had a partnership and I would be pleased with the scrap settlement offered to us. Because they showed up at our office without warning, we didn't have a lot of time to do our homework about the scrap's worth, so we handed over the jar and hoped for the best.

A week later we received an email from the metal refiner, stating that our final settlement was \$3,017.10. We had submitted similar amounts in years past and thought that price seemed very low, especially because palladium prices were soaring.

We did some research and discovered that along with the (reasonable) 10 percent refining fee, there also was an "accountability rate" charge of nearly 30 percent. When combined, that meant the refining company wanted to take 38 percent of our scrap's worth.

We asked the company to return our metals, which we received shortly thereafter in the form of a melted bar.

Fewer fees lead to significant savings

I reconnected with Scientific Metals, a company we had previously used for several years with very good results, after recalling their ads in *Dentaltown* magazine which specifically advertised "No Hidden Fees." One of the owners said they could analyze and sample the bar *without* having to remelt it, which would keep it in its original condition in case of any disagreement; this was very comforting. More importantly, after I explained about the extra charges and the "accountability rate" included in our initial estimate, he explained that given the total charge of about 38 percent that I incurred, the bar's total value would be around \$4,900 and I should receive about \$4,400 from them. A big difference without the "accountability rate."

The end result was \$4,450.39—nearly \$1,500 more than the original estimate. I encourage anyone to talk to Scientific Metals. In a sea of hidden fees, they are honest and reputable. I won't be going to anyone else.

I encourage all dental offices to let Scientific Metals appraise their scrap: Visit scientificmetals.com or call 888-949-0008. ■