

HOLE

Surveillance

New metal detection system ensures
Clyde's Delicious Donuts delivers the safest
and highest-quality products to consumers.

BY SHANE WHITAKER

In a perfect world, metal detection systems at food plants wouldn't be necessary. Conveyors would never fray. Incoming raw materials would be free of screws and bolts and metal shavings. And sabotage would never enter our minds.

However, there's no such thing as a perfect world. And for food safety, metal detection systems have been a godsend. They provide assurance that a lunatic isn't dropping pins or needles in mixing bowls. They also act as maintenance monitors for plant equipment. And they ensure consumers receive food products free from any other contamination that may occur during production.

Clyde's Delicious Donuts, Addison, Ill., has been making donuts since before the first metal detection system ever existed. In 1920, German entrepreneur Herman Seekamp purchased Clyde's Delicious Donuts, a small donut shop in the Lincoln Park area of Chicago. Clyde's delivered fresh baked foods to Chicago-area restaurants, food service operations, convenience stores and grocery stores. In 1962, Mr. Seekamp's son-in-law Bill Bickford purchased the donut business and continued to expand, moving to Clyde's second plant in 1968. By 1981, Bill's sons, Kim and Kend Bickford, had joined the company and now preside over daily operations. In 1982, the company began producing frozen donuts, just a few years after adding the first metal detection systems to its product lines.

In 1990, greater customer demand required the business to move to its current 53,000-sq-ft facility. Today the company makes more than 2 million donuts per week on three donut lines with more than 80% of the product frozen and shipped to retailers coast-to-coast.

Guaranteeing that the highest-quality and safest product comes off of its lines is of utmost importance to Clyde's; therefore, the company decided to upgrade its metal detection system last year. Clyde's purchased three new custom-made Phantom metal detection systems from Fortress Technology.

BETTER DETECTION. "We were looking for better sensitivity, especially in regard to stainless steel, and the

Fortress units were able to deliver," said Larry Frank, Clyde's plant manager.

Detecting small amounts of stainless steel had been a continuing battle for the company, he said, but not anymore. The new systems detect traces of stainless steel, as well as ferrous and nonferrous metals.

Whether a product can be potentially contaminated through an ingredient received from a supplier or by one of the many mechanical devices encountered during production, Clyde's, like any food producer, must take the necessary steps to make sure the consumer receives a safe product.

All three lines at the plant feature the new metal detection systems installed right before the packager, and the systems are tested several times a shift as part of Clyde's quality control protocol. In fact, the metal detectors are tested more often than they actually find a contaminated product, which may occur once or twice a week at most, according to Mr. Frank, who has been extremely pleased by the performance of the Phantom metal detectors.

"The new systems have not failed," he added. "Since we put them in, our complaint level on tramp metal contamination has been reduced to zero."

GREATER RELIABILITY. In addition to increasing sensitivity levels, the new metal detection systems also provided

▼ Clyde's Delicious Donuts manufactures more than 2 million donuts per week, and its donuts are sold in 25 states.

REGAL PACKAGING SERVICES, INC.





▲ Clyde's purchased three new metal detectors last year in an effort to improve levels of product safety for consumers.
REGAL PACKAGING SERVICES, INC.

Clyde's with several other benefits, Mr. Frank said.

The new systems are easier to maintain, he noted. "They are extremely reliable machines," Mr. Frank said. "They have certainly cut down on the amount of maintenance that we have had to put into our systems. With our previous systems, we were performing maintenance daily. They always seemed to need some type of adjustment, where the Fortress system is self calibrating."

Rob LaScola, quality assurance manager, added that the systems have held up quite well in the harsh produc-

tion environment compared with previous systems. "We are quite pleased with the way the machines have worked and the service we have received," he said.

And if one of the units ever would require maintenance, Mr. Frank said, the company received enough spare parts with each system that they could virtually rebuild the whole unit.

Additionally, Dave Kells, Clyde's purchasing manager, said from an installation standpoint, the new system was a breeze. "It took only minutes to run product through and set up the appropriate variables," he said. "These models have the ability to teach themselves and to retain the different product lines we produce. Less adjustments mean we can virtually eliminate any chance of operator error."

In fact, the Phantom metal detection system is able to electronically recognize when a changeover of product has occurred on the line based on the moisture content and size of the product, Mr. Frank said.

Clyde's met with several metal detector manufacturers before selecting Fortress, which was represented by Bob Loerop of Regal Packaging Services, Inc. The company was able to meet all of the Clyde's needs, including written guarantees, and delivered the product at a price that fit Clyde's budget.

"These systems really have been a problem solver," Mr. Kells concluded. ■

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