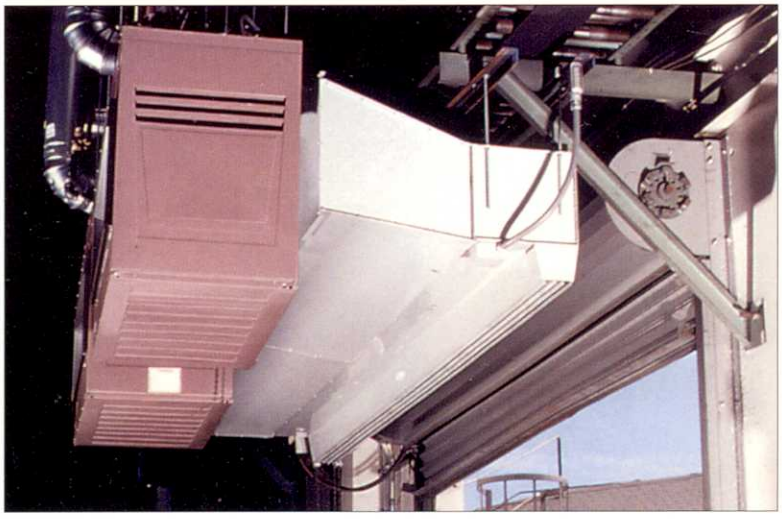
Reprinted from The NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF BUSINESS NEWS PUBLISHING CO. BNP P.O. BOX 2600, TROY, MI 48007 • Copyright 1998

Air curtains provide key to Kwikset's winter problem

Kwikset Corp. in Anaheim, Calif. relies on its workers to maintain the company's high standards in lock sets, but gusting breezes that followed busy forklift traffic through two large doors put a chill in the air during winter months.

FANS & AIR HANDLERS



Air curtains can be installed above exterior or interior building openings, creating a wall of moving air that minimizes heat transfer by preventing cold air from traveling inside during the winter or to maintain air conditioning during the summer.

Anaheim's winters are hardly arctic, but for Kwikset's assembly plant employees, the 40°F winds that came whistling through two 14-ft square doors during cold weather months created uncomfortable working conditions.

The ideal way to control inside temperatures without obstructing forklift traffic moving between outside storage and inside assembly areas proved to be a Mars Air Door© air curtain system for each opening.

Air curtains can be installed above exterior or interior building openings, creating a wall of moving air which minimizes heat transfer by preventing cold air from traveling inside during the winter or to maintain air conditioning during the summer.

The same curtain of air can be heated, as it is at the Kwikset plant. The system is also a highly effective barrier against dust, dirt, insects and other pollutants.

It was Kwikset's long-time heating and air conditioning contractor, Dennis Starr, who proposed installing Mars air curtains to eliminate the source of worker discomfort. The project was completed in the first weeks of 1996.

"The people at Kwikset are ecstatic about the temperature control the system provides in that work area. Although it has probably improved productivity and may have decreased absenteeism, Kwikset made this investment to improve the comfort of their workers, which is pretty terrific and says a lot about the company," said Starr, of Starr State Air, Anaheim.

Each of the two large doors has four blowers to create the air curtain, and two natural gas-type heaters to warm the air. Mars manufactures air curtain systems with gas, electric, steam, and hot water heating. "Kwikset chose a natural gas system because the same type of heat was already in use throughout the plant," Starr added.

The company also elected to install an optional control panel that puts temperature control at the flip of a switch. "A laser eye-infrared system activates the air curtain and heaters automatically when a forklift breaks the beam. This fires the burners and very quickly, we have 95° air across the door opening," Starr explained.

"In the summer months, when 90° weather is not unusual, we use the air curtains for increased air circulation, without the natural gas heaters. Each of the units generates air velocity of 14,000 cfm," he added.

Starr said, "We have used Mars air curtains before, but this was the first project we did from a total design-build perspective. I would absolutely use the same system again."

Industrial uses range from applications in the manufacturing sector to large retail establishments, such as warehouse clubs and mass merchandisers, schools, prisons, hotels, and hospitals.

For more information, contact Mars Air Door, 14716 S. Broadway, Gardena, Calif. 90248; 800-421-1266; 310-324-3030 (fax); Internet: www.marsair.com; Email: info@marsair.com.