

Inflatable Bird Deterrent Helps Food Processing Plant Comply with Health Codes

Maintaining a building's facilities is a challenge for most plant engineers. Maintaining food processing facilities that must pass regular health inspections is even more challenging. Birds roosting at or near the facility can make it a losing battle.

"It's always been a battle for us to keep birds away," said James Reeves, building maintenance supervisor at the Frito-Lay manufacturing plant in Cucamonga, CA. "We're right next to a regional park, which makes the bird problem a lot tougher for us. Hundreds of crows, sparrows, starlings, and sea gulls would gather around our waste product area where there was food laying around. Our hands were tied, but we had to find a solution because of the tight inspection policies within the food processing industry."

Bird droppings on pallets in the loading area are a violation of the Food and Drug Association health codes. "If we're unloading trucks outside, we don't want the birds to even come close to hitting the containers," Reeves said. "The bird problem is one which everyone in food processing experiences at one time or another, if food or waste is exposed outside," he added. "We knew our problem was getting out of hand."

After trying other alternatives without success, Frito-Lay found its solution from a local distributor of bird repellent products. "We were trying an ultrasound device at the time. Our distributor suggested that we try the Terror-Eyes balloon made by Bird-X, Inc.," said Joe Becerra, plant sanitarian.

Once he saw how the balloons worked, Becerra took it seriously. He initially purchased two of the yellow inflatables with the "moving" holographic lens eyes. The unit's moving eyes resemble those of an owl, a predator of other birds. He placed the balloons in locations where he could "scare the birds off."

"Terror-Eyes has helped to reduce bird activity here about 90%," Becerra said. "Because this was the most effective solution we've tried, I ordered nine more. Before, hundreds of birds flocked here to fight over a popcorn kernel. Now only a few birds can be

seen in the area, because they seem afraid of the balloons."

"We have saved money as a result of using Terror-Eyes. Thanks to these in-

flatables, this plant has stayed in compliance with our headquarters, county, state, and federal inspectors. If we were to be shut down for not being in compliance with health codes, the company could be in big trouble financially," Becerra explained.

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Inflatable balloons with holographic eyes that seem to follow the bird deter roosting and put an end to the accompanying mess and health hazards in plant areas.