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Strip Curtains Help To Minimise Dust In Production And Packaging Facilities

The quality, maximised shelf life and saleability of consumables are dependent on several factors, including their freshness. Linked to this is the absence of pollutants and unsafe micro-organisms. Creating favourable environmental conditions with temporary climate control solutions helps keep products healthy and wholesome for as long as possible, and promotes worker productivity.

Dangers associated with not using temporary climate control measures in food processing, packaging and storage facilities include the growth and spread of micro-organisms, even in areas considered clean, due to excessive moisture. A lack of proper airflow may allow contaminants and dust particles to reach food production areas.

If dry foods are exposed to moisture, the resultant mould and bacterial growth can lead to spoilage and food borne illnesses. Without the proper temperature regulation, the shelf life of some foods may decrease. In addition, higher environmental temperatures may lead to the breakdown of vitamins in food, thus decreasing their nutritional value.

In general, the design of food packaging keeps consumable goods from spoiling and prolongs its shelf life. However, the presence of moisture in a warehouse, for example, may cause metal cans to corrode and paper packaging to break down. This package deterioration could cause food contamination or spoilage. Heat can further deteriorate food packaging, particularly if it comes from sunlight.

Naturally, one of the top priorities in the food processing industry is food safety. Even in the most tightly controlled, sanitised environments, excess moisture and incorrect environmental temperatures can make it difficult to maintain safety standards. The incorporation of temporary climate control solutions can assist in maintaining sanitary conditions and ideal temperatures by eliminating excess moisture.

According to Wim Dessing, sales executive at Apex Strip Curtains & Doors, there are several elements that assist in providing temporary climate control within food processing and other manufacturing facilities. These include HVAC systems, vacuum/exhaust systems and barrier control

systems. The latter could include customised strip curtains, which allow facilities to create zones that reduce the influx of dust and other pollutants as well as minimise variations in humidity and temperature.

Dessing explains that the ideal would be to include barrier zones at the onset of building design, but that strip curtains can be readily incorporated into brownfields projects. The layout and design of the food processing or manufacturing facility should be adapted to the hygienic requirements of a given process, packaging or storage area. It should allow the flow of material, personnel, air and waste in the right direction.

Dust control is critical in a wide spectrum of industries from manufacturing to food packaging. Woodworking, painting, powdered ingredients/spice mixing and packaging, ceramic cutting/grinding, powdered chemical processing and packaging are just a few of the applications for which it is important.

At the nuisance level, particulate generated from cutting, grinding and mixing can settle on surfaces significant distances from the operation if containment equipment is not in place. In terms of product quality, uncontrolled particulate matter can spoil or degrade batches of critical materials, whether in chemical or food processing. In addition, there are many instances where high enough concentrations of airborne dust-sized particulate in a closed space can become explosive or flammable.

On a personnel level, airborne dust can be a health hazard to employees, ranging from skin, eye, or bronchial irritation to more serious issues for people with asthma. Most serious can be the potential for particulates to cause lung diseases like cancer.

Apex General Purpose Strip Curtains are designed to mitigate dust and pollutant ingress and can significantly improve the effectiveness of vacuum/extraction systems while offering the opportunity for cost savings, both in the initial cost of the equipment and in direct operating cost. By minimising the area to be exhausted, smaller fans can be used, with less total air movement being required. Lower air velocity through filter media increases the effective particle separation of the device. Additionally, lower air flow through the filter reduces the frequency required for changeout or cleaning.

“In addition to reducing the volume of space to be exhausted, Apex General Purpose Strip Curtains act as a very effective physical barrier on their own, blocking transfer of dust particles from one area to another. We employ stringent quality systems in the manufacture of our strip curtains, using only a specially formulated PVC material, which does not become brittle with use and age. Apex General Purpose Strip Curtains are transparent for optimum visibility and safety, and incorporate the specially designed and patented Balledge® feature, which ensures an effective thermal seal at all times,” Dessing points out.

Despite this efficient seal, the strips are designed to part easily under pressure to allow people and goods to move through unhindered. In addition, the rounded edge on the strips ensures that they do not snag or scratch goods or people as they move from one area to another.

DUST AND POLLUTANT ELIMINATION PIC 01 : Apex General Purpose Strip Curtains are designed to mitigate dust and pollutant ingress and can significantly improve the effectiveness of vacuum/extraction systems.

DUST AND POLLUTANT ELIMINATION PIC 02 : Apex General Purpose Strip Curtains act as a very effective physical barrier on their own, blocking transfer of dust particles from one area to another.

DUST AND POLLUTANT ELIMINATION PIC 03 : Apex General Purpose Strip Curtains are transparent for optimum visibility and safety, and incorporate the specially designed and patented Balledge® feature.

DUST AND POLLUTANT ELIMINATION PIC 04 : Apex General Purpose Strip Curtains are used across numerous industries to eliminate pollutants by cordoning off areas.

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