

## BIRDS ARE BAD BUSINESS

### *ultrasonic devices get rid of menace*

An open loading dock is an open invitation to birds. Birds are drawn to warehouses and manufacturing facilities as if to magnets. High rafters for roosting and easy "in and out" access via big bay doors are just too attractive.

Most manufacturers are all too familiar with the birds' ability to become major mess-making nuisances for employees. Worse yet, birds can threaten customer relations.

#### SCOURGE OF THE WAREHOUSE

Fletcher Kerns, warehouse shipping manager for Wheaton Injection Molding Co., had an ongoing problem: "Birds would fly in the bay shipping doors and leave droppings on the customers' cartons and customers didn't like it."

The company's warehouse covers one acre. The open loading dock area where the birds gathered measures about 100 feet and was open eight or nine hours a day. The problem was serious enough, Kerns says, that the company was worried about losing customers.

The prime culprits were pigeons and starlings. The company couldn't risk sending out cartons loaded with bird droppings — particularly not where pharmaceutical, medical and cosmetic components were involved. In addition to being unsightly, bird droppings are a health hazard.

#### GOOD RIDDANCE

It was time for tough action. "We tried exterminators who used poison, electric wires and spikes on the birds' roosting areas but none worked. Then we saw an ultrasonic device advertised in trade publications. We sent for information and purchased two rotating units."

The ultrasonic UET-120 unit that Kerns ordered is manufactured by Bird-X Inc. The unit is about half the size of a shoe box and weighs less than eight pounds. It produces sound waves that are inaudible to humans, but very annoying to birds. It rotates on a turntable, sending the bird-bothering signals in a 360-degree sweep for 45 feet or more. As the unit revolves, it emits high-frequency sound waves in all directions and bombards birds with sounds they can't tolerate, but which are physically harmless to them.

"The ultrasonic units were easy to install," Kerns says. He placed them high up on the beams in the warehouses, directed at the loading dock area. They worked immediately and they have continued to work since he installed them more than a year ago.

#### COMBINED FORCES

When Kerns sent away for the UET units, he also ordered several "Terror-Eyes" inflatable balls from Bird-X. These two-foot diameter vinyl balls with two sets of holographic "eyes" look like giant owls — frightening to most birds, especially when the terrible eyes give the appearance of "following" the birds' every move.

"We put three Terror-Eyes up first," Kerns says, "and a couple of weeks later we put in the ultrasonics." The

combination of the two proved telling. Kerns has straightforward advice for others who are battling the birds: "Go for the ultrasonics; they work the best. Terror-Eyes reinforces the ultrasonics."

At Wheaton Injection Moulding, the ultrasonic units are running 24 hours a day, and the bothersome birds are gone. Kerns is happy, and so are the company's customers. So are two of Kerns' employees who used to spend an hour every day cleaning up the birds' mess.

#### UNIVERSAL APPLICATION

What's good for an injection molding company is good for a die-cast hardware manufacturer. Dave Carlson, electrician for Quality Metal Finishing Co., had a similar loading-dock situation and the birds were taking advantage of it. The company, which manufactures die-cast fixtures for the plumbing industry, has a recessed loading dock about 30 feet by 40 feet. The loading dock is covered by the building overhang, but it's open to the birds.

"We tried putting wire mesh across the areas where the birds were nesting in the ceiling rafters," Carlson says, "but as time went on the mesh deteriorated. The pigeons and sparrows would slowly migrate back in. Also, they were triggering the burglar alarm system. They'd set off the motion detector, which notified the police."

The problem was escalating and the buildup of bird droppings became so bad that the building needed repainting.

#### REPELLING THE PEST

After the building was repainted, the company wanted to make sure that the building stayed clean. "We saw a Bird-X ultrasonic product in a trade magazine and thought we'd give it a try," Carlson explains. "When it arrived, we read the directions and I installed it myself, mounting it to the bottom of the rafters." It was simple to install. "No special wiring or equipment was needed. Just plug it in," he says. In a few days, we noticed that the birds would fly in and fly right back out. They stayed out and they didn't nest. The unit worked perfectly. It does what Bird-X claims it will do."

Carlson particularly likes the versatility of the Bird-X ultrasonic. "The unit seems to work on irregular shapes. You don't have to be concerned with the construction of the building; it will take care of open interior spaces," he says. For example, in Carlson's application, the bar joists that support the roof form a criss-cross design, with crevices where birds roost. "The sound seems to travel around and through the joist," totally discouraging the birds from landing.

#### NUISANCE NIPPED

Both Dave Carlson, like Fletcher Kerns, has found ultrasonic devices to be the perfect answer for protecting loading docks from pesky birds without interfering with operations or detracting from appearances.

**Bird-X Inc.**

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