



Case study

Healthier staff at a major laundry – plus 88 % less dust



Customer

Comforta Oy



Location

Oulu (FI)



Sector

Textile services



Dust reduction

88 %

At a glance

“We would highly recommend Zehnder's air cleaning systems to any business facing similar dust issues.”

Heikki Bolszak, Maintenance and Servicing

Challenges

Comforta Oy is an industrial laundry for hotels, restaurants and hospitals and handles about 10,000 kg of textiles every day. This activity generated enormous amounts of dust: when the fabrics are unpacked, fine fibres and fluff, which is difficult to see with the naked eye, were getting into the air. These tiny particles were settling everywhere, affecting the speed and efficiency of the machines and resulting in high cleaning costs. In addition, employees were frequently suffering from flu-like symptoms caused by the excessive amount of dust in the factory.

About Comforta Oy

Comforta Oy, based in Oulu Finland, provides textile services to hotels, restaurants and hospitals. Founded in 2000, it takes enormous pride in the quality of its products and considers textile handling to be a real art. The team enjoys the work and employees are rarely absent. However, machines were slow and inefficient, cleaning costs were high and staff were regularly suffering from flu like symptoms because of the excess dust in the factory.

Benefits

Within one year, the dust quantity in the factory was reduced by 88 % through using Zehnder's industrial air cleaners. The now resulting clean air means more efficient, speedier processes and makes the work easier. The air quality has improved so much that employees suffer less frequently from coughs and colds. The effort and thus the cost of cleaning has also significantly reduced.



Fine fibres circulating

Comforta Oy operates in a giant 1,700 m² industrial factory, handling 10,000 kg of textiles every day. Textile handling creates huge amounts of dust. While unpacking different kind of fabrics, fine fibres and fluffs circulate in the air. They are so fine that you can hardly see them.

Such was the dust that it started moving into the ventilation ducts and the machinery, **which started to negatively impact operational efficiency** because the machines had to be stopped regularly to be cleaned, which in itself was a significant additional cost to the company.

As well as economic and operational challenges, the dust also significantly impacted the working conditions, making work difficult for Comforta Oy's dedicated workforce. Both production manager Marja Rajala and the maintenance staff member Heikki Bolszak received feedback **that the breathing air was poor, and the staff suffered from sneezing and coughing on a regular basis.** There had to be a solution.

Radical improvement for working conditions

Zehnder Clean Air Solutions were installed in Comforta Oy's Koivuhaka site in 2013, and the results have been excellent. Since then, the clean air units have been installed across the Mäntsälä, Tampere and Jyväskylä sites.

When hearing about the success across Comforta's other sites, Comforta Oulu decided to install units of the CleanAir 6 and CleanAir 12 models in May 2015.

Initially maintenance staff member Heikki Bolszak was sceptical about the devices. He commented: "I saw the huge amounts of dust and I doubted that a few gadgets could really make any difference."

The air treatment system was installed into the production hall and the results were monitored over a three-month period and thereafter.

Dust decreases by 88 %

In just a year, the amount of dust in the Oulu factory decreased by 88 %, from 520 µg/m³ to 66 µg/m³. Heikki Bolszak's suspicions were unfounded.

"We have these tumble dryers that are five to six meters high. During the weekly and monthly cleaning I noticed that the amount of dust on top the ventilation ducts has massively reduced. When there is a reduced amount of dust in the air, our lives are much easier!"

Production manager Marja Rajala values the staff well-being and work environment above anything else. The summer heat makes it really tiring to work, **but last summer there was a big difference thanks to the air cleaning systems.** She said: "Effectiveness didn't decrease and it was more comfortable to work as the air flow was better."

And this is not her only observation, as the staff have also said that the air quality has improved, **making it easier to breathe in the workplace** and massively reducing the number of staff suffering from coughs and colds.

Customer-centered: The Zehnder service

Marja Rajala and Heikki Bolszak are very happy with the partnership with Zehnder. “Zehnder is easy to co-operate with. The instructions are clear, and our opinions are taken into consideration. It’s great.” Rajala concluded.

Bolszak added: “Zehnder visits regularly which creates the impression that they truly care about the customer. I have a very positive image of their operation **and would highly recommend it to any business suffering the same problems** we were.”

