Kistler-Morse®

Batching Products

case history

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Market: Bulk Storage of Grains for Beer Brewing

CUSTOMER

Latrobe Brewing Company, Latrobe, Penn., brews the Rolling Rock label of beers.

PROBLEM

Managers at the Latrobe brewery were dissatisfied with an old batching system for measuring rice, corn and malt used to brew beer. "The old system was inaccurate, hard to keep calibrated and it failed a lot," says Chuck Dunn, brewing utilities and maintenance supervisor. "They weren't reliable, so that meant there was an inconsistent amount amount batched in, and led to a significant amount of material loss during production." The company had to find a better batching system.

APPLICATION

In 1987, the facility decided to try a Kistler-Morse batching control system, using the company's load cells to measure two different batch sizes. An air conveying system transfers grains from nine steel silos (measuring 100-feet tall by 10-feet in diameter) to small holding hoppers, which unload into scale hoppers. Once there, the batcher controls the addition of rice, corn and malt into a large batch that ultimately is sent to a brewing vessel.

BENEFIT

The Kistler-Morse system is accurate between 1 to 2% on the batches, according to Dunn. "But actually, we're more concerned with repeatability, and we've been very satisfied with that. Plus we only have to recalibrate them once a year." So far the facility has had only one problem: at one point, the system's central processing unit failed. The company's response was immediate, Dunn says. "The CPU just plain quit. I called Kistler-Morse and they turned things around quickly. I had replacement parts the very next day."

CONCLUSION

"Our experience with Kistler-Morse has been real good," Dunn says, adding that the facility plans to upgrade production methods. "We're going to be interfacing into a new distributed control system within the next year or so, and they (Kistler-Morse instruments) already have the necessary internal communications to interface with the new equipment going in."