



HCD Plus desiccant
dehumidifier controls
film vault climate

Pacific Titles Archives, USA



Munters industrial dehumidification equipment is delivering temperature and humidity control for Pacific Title Archives, a major motion picture industry storage provider. Pacific Title Archives has been a major storage provider for the motion picture industry since 1935. The film preservation facility includes a 2,300-square-foot vault where up to 80,000 film canisters can be stored.

This project required an advanced storage system that employed state-of-the-art technology to keep the media collection safe and secure so items would remain in flawless condition, over time. The vault sits inside a warehouse and requires the optimal use of space while still allowing easy access to multiple clients. Film storage is critical since it is so delicate. Long term archiving is very important for motion picture clients because films can't be remade as they were produced, but can be tampered with and ruined without proper handling.

High heat and moisture levels in storage areas cause cellulose triacetate degradation or "vinegar syndrome," which gets its name from the films' smell. If one film begins to emit acetic acid, it could pose a serious threat to surrounding films and ruin an entire collection.

Case study

- Air Treatment Pacific Titles Archives Vault

Advantages:

- Stop mold and mildew growth and stabilize conditions
- Prevent "vinegar syndrome" and color fading
- Minimize pollutants and save on energy costs
- Allow for quick access for easy maintenance



The HCD Plus provides a precise temperature of 45°F with a relative humidity of 25%, which was required to ensure the preservation of safety film reels for many years to come.

The Munters solution

McMurray Stern, a design build contractor offering high density shelving and mobile filing systems was brought in by Pacific Title Archives to offer a solution. First, in order to control temperature and humidity, and minimize offgassing in the vault, McMurray Stern consulted with archival expert, Peter Dahlbeck of Dahlbeck Engineering Company, a Munters representative, to design a dehumidification system for installation just outside of the vault vestibule.

The Munters HCD-600 Plus custom-designed dehumidification and filtration system was selected as it can remove moisture from the air through a desiccant rotor and guarantee precise humidity control by modulating face and bypass dampers. Munters' patented HoneyCombe® wheel is a self-regenerating desiccant rotor. When the air to be dried passes through the rotor, the desiccant removes the water vapor directly from the air and holds it while the wheel rotates. As the moisture-laden desiccant passes through the reactivation sector, the water vapor is transferred to a heated air stream, which is exhausted to the outside. The process is continuous, allowing for uninterrupted dehumidification, optimizing performance while minimizing operating costs.

"The storage standards for color film are the most stringent," said Dahlbeck. "To extend the life of the collection, control of the relative humidity is most critical. Munters unique desiccant technology controls humidity at a low temperature that is economically feasible." With pre-engineered add-on modules, the HCD Plus provided fast and cost-effective manufacturing and the flexibility to customize equipment that had been defined by the end user's needs.

The 2,000 scfm system keeps the vault at a precise temperature of 45°F with a relative humidity of 25% to ensure the preservation of safety film reels. The low-temperature storage helps to preserve film at a level where the humidity is manageable. The unit also does over four air changes per hour and removes pollutants and particles by carbon and HEPA filtration. The vault is regulated by a passive smart system, which automatically monitors climate activities and sends a notification if there is a breach or change inside. This provides a level of security that facilitates a quick response in case of emergency to ensure that content condition is maintained.



Quick turnaround

The film, stored in canisters, is held on twenty mechanically assisted, mobile carriages inside of the vault that operate on a recessed-rail unit, manufactured by Spacesaver. The recessed-rail tracks are laid to allow the carriages to be easily navigated so the canisters can be accessed, while taking up little space.

Proposing a quick timeline and following through as planned was crucial to the storage vault construction. By selecting Munters' modular, HCD Plus system, McMurray Stern was able to quickly provide a custom, packaged air processing system. The entire project took two months, a quick turnaround that was tailored to Pacific Title Archives' requirements.

"We're very happy with [McMurray Stern]," said John Bragg, Branch Manager of Pacific Title Archives. "From start to finish, they were perfect in everything. They did everything on time, actually finishing ahead of schedule."

Would you like to find out if Munters has a solution for your company too? If so, please visit our website, www.munters.com

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