



## Protecting Their Investment

Flex-N-Gate provides safe, clean working environment with help from RoboVent

*“Now, our fires  
have been virtually  
eliminated.”*

**T**ony Sarkis, weld assembly manager for Flex-N-Gate Corp., Urbana, Illinois, is a proponent of a safe, clean working environment that exceeds industry standards through the efficient use of air filtration systems. “We have to make sure we maintain a high standard,” he says. “Our old air filtration unit allowed our particulate level to exceed an acceptable limit so the need for a more efficient system was paramount.”

Flex-N-Gate is committed to continual improvement of its Environmental Management System (EMS), which includes waste minimization; the prevention of pollution; and compliance with all relevant federal, state and local environmental regulations. Flex-N-Gate manufactures bumpers primarily for General Motors, Ford Motor Co., Honda, Toyota and Mercedes.

Flex-N-Gate was incorporated in 1956 to produce stock racks for pickup trucks that featured a flexible roll-up rear gate, and the company expanded in the 1960s to include the production of rear-step bumpers for pickup trucks. It employs approximately 300 people



at its plant in Windsor, Ontario, and has 16 plants in the United States and more than 40 worldwide.

### **Easy Installation**

In an effort to continue to sustain and exceed industry regulations for its plant's particulate levels, Flex-N-Gate decided to upgrade its air filtration system. The air filtration system that was already in place didn't do an efficient job of drawing smoke away from the welding units, causing a potential hazardous working condition.

Before deciding on an air filtration system, Flex-N-Gate went through three different manufacturers of exhaust units before deciding on a RoboVent FloorSaver system. "Prior to installing the RoboVent system, a lot of our units would catch on fire," Sarkis says. "Now, our fires have been virtually eliminated."

Flex-N-Gate has 15 RoboVent units in place. The RoboVent FloorSaver air filtration system mounts directly on top of the welding cell, uses no ductwork and can be moved with the cell. It captures 100 percent of welding smoke and fumes, filters and cleans the air, and returns clean air to the plant.

Sarkis says that since installation of the

RoboVent FloorSaver system, employee morale has increased and objections about working conditions and potential dangers have drastically decreased. "There were a lot of complaints about the smoke our previous units emitted and their tendency to catch on fire," Sarkis says. "We have minimal complaints now."

Sarkis adds that the RoboVent system was easily installed and none of Flex-N-Gate's units had to be altered. "The company worked to our specifications," he says. "We didn't have to change any of our equipment; they made their systems work for us."

The RoboVent FloorSaver system can be installed on most weld cells using the existing enclosure or guarding. The customized hood and curtain makes installation easy and cost-efficient, and the clear vinyl tops increase light and visibility inside the cell. The enclosed system captures exhaust and contaminated air at the source and removes airborne contaminants before they can settle. It filters impurities and returns clean air to the workplace.

### **The Power of Prevention**

Sarkis also uses RoboVent's Preventative

Maintenance Program to maintain the RoboVent units. Each month two RoboVent workers check each of the 15 units to ensure effectiveness and productivity. "I used to get dirty from head to toe trying to maintain our previous systems," Sarkis says. "But with RoboVent, the maintenance and upkeep of the units are no longer concerns or priorities that we have to worry about."

Since the systems have been installed, Sarkis says that there has been a definite improvement in air quality. "Before installation, we just met industry standards for particulates in the air. Now we are well below the limit."

RoboVent dedicates one filtration unit to each weld cell, which in turn distributes the job of cleaning the air and allows for extra ventilation. This eliminates the possibility of total system failure and greatly reduces production delays and downtime during maintenance.

"RoboVent is committed to delivering a good product," adds Sarkis. He says the best features of the RoboVent system are the almost nonexistent maintenance and the longevity of each unit.