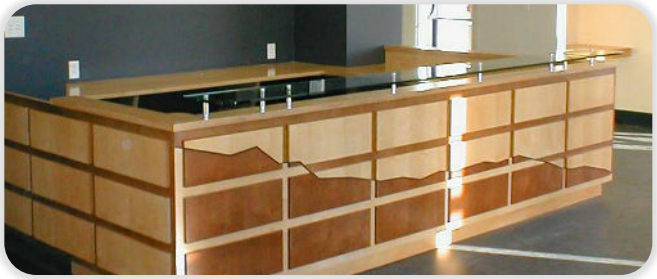
CASE HISTORY

Watson Wood Works Avoids OSHA Fines and Saves Millions in Cleaning Costs and Lost Productivity

Watson Wood Works fabricates quality custom cabinetry and architectural millwork for educational, corporate, financial, and medical facilities in the U.S. With various CNC, routing, edgebanding, and other machinery, they know about dust production. Using Dust Collectors at the source, they're able to capture some but not all of the dust produced in their 40,000 square foot facility.



Under Threat of OSHA Penalties

In 2013, Watson Wood Works received a surprise visit... from an OSHA inspector. At one point, Watson was part of an annual inspection program, but they hadn't seen anyone in 10 years. With the lack of regular visits, some of their housekeeping had fallen behind.

One of the immediate areas of concern? Combustible dust buildup over 1/32 of an inch in the rafters. It covered the surface, obstructing visibility of the material beneath, which resulted in a violation.

According to Jesse Watson, President of Watson Wood Works, "It could have easily been a finable offense." Instead, the OSHA inspector gave them time to make corrective actions regarding the dust. Watson's first inclination was to hire a specialized cleaning crew. But the quote was prohibitively expensive. "It would have cost $40,000 per cleaning, and we'd need bi-annual visits. Add that to the lost production, and it would have cost us well over $200,000 per year in fees and lost revenue. It just wasn't sustainable."

Finding an Affordable Alternative to Bi-Annual Cleaning

That's when Jesse Watson reached out to SonicAire. He struck up a conversation with Chuck Morrison, Vice President of Sales. Morrison, along with the engineering team at SonicAire, guided them through the process.

> "I worked with Watson for several years trying to help them with their dust collection systems. Dust collection can only collect "so much." The fans just made sense to help them stay ahead of their dust buildup."
>
> - Chuck Morrison
> Vice President of Sales

They developed a facility layout, showing fan placement with the most effective overlapping radii to protect the facility. According to Morrison, "I worked with Watson for several years trying to help them with their dust collection systems. Dust collection can only collect "so much." The fans just made sense to help them stay ahead of their dust buildup."

Watson took the proposal to OSHA, and they signed off on the solution. SonicAire Dust Control Fans were purchased and installed for approximately $55,000 and immediately had a positive impact on facility maintenance.

All of this happened well before the National Fire Prevention Association introduced the NFPA 652 Standard. Today, the newest standard considers Dust Control Fans an effective measure to comply with combustible dust management requirements.

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SonicAire®

> "SonicAire fans run without any issue, giving us peace of mind that employee safety is taken care of and the element of danger posed by combustible dust is mitigated in the most efficient way."
>
> - Jesse Watson
> President of Watson Wood Works

A Sustainable Approach to Dust Management

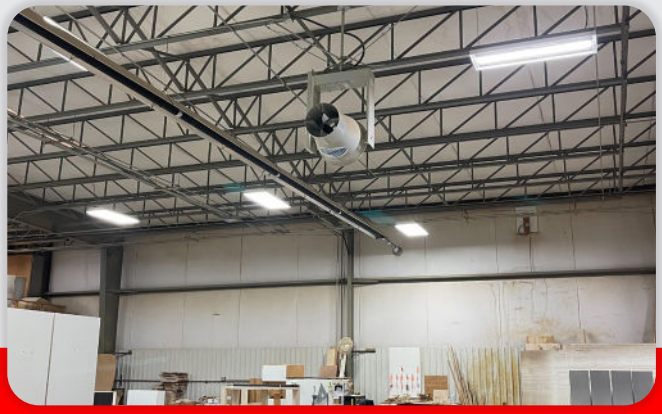
Watson estimates the maintenance and operation of the fans costs less than $1,000 per year. "They're very reliable and require minimal maintenance," he remarks. Compared to the $200,000 annual cost to shut down and clean, it's clear that Watson made the right choice.

During a recent follow-up visit, the plant was in full operation and overhead spaces were still clear. A member of the SonicAire team asked about the potential of another OSHA visit. Combustible dust compliance is no longer a concern for Watson. "SonicAire fans run without any issue, giving us peace of mind that employee safety is taken care of and that the element of danger is not a concern," he says.

Similar to other facilities across the United States, Watson Wood Works can now focus on more important tasks such as increasing output instead of maintaining compliance and cleaning hard-to-reach areas.

SonicAire Solutions for Woodworking

Woodworking operations create significant dust challenges. Each project is unique, from the sheer volume of dust in the air to the facility layout. That's why SonicAire reviews your facility specifications and develops a custom analysis of how SonicAire fans can use our BarrierAire™ technology to eliminate and/or prevent combustible dust accumulation. Once installed, our Dust Control fans eliminate the excessive dust buildup in hard-to-reach areas, minimizing the cost of housekeeping, and improving worker safety and productivity, all while keeping your facility compliant with OSHA and NFPA regulations.



We're so confident in our products' ability to solve your problems that we're now offering you the SonicAire Compliance Guarantee.*

As long as SonicAire fans are correctly installed and maintained according to our engineers' layout/engineering recommendations, they will eliminate the need for housekeeping in hard-to-reach overhead spaces.

And if they don't, we'll provide a full refund on the cost of fans or reimburse the cost of any imposed fine, whichever is less.*

*See SonicAire.com/Compliance-Guarantee for full details and terms.

SONICAIRE COMPLIANCE GUARANTEE

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