

PROBLEM SOLVED

McCain Foods

Challenge:

As a three-shift frozen foods business, McCain Foods' 20 electric lift trucks required three batteries per truck. In order to maintain uptime, McCain needed to store the resulting 60 batteries in their Appleton, Wis., facility.

Solution:

Yale Materials Handling – Green Bay (YMH – Green Bay) helped maximize McCain's lift truck fleet capabilities by gathering data to better understand their needs. As a result, McCain switched from conventional battery charging to opportunity battery charging.

Impact:

With assistance from YMH – Green Bay, McCain moved from three lift truck batteries per truck to one, eliminated 10 battery chargers and reduced the facility's total battery storage from 60 to 20 batteries.

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1909 in Florenceville, New Brunswick, McCain Foods is the most famous Canadian brand name in the world. A global leader in the frozen food industry, with 53 worldwide facilities and annual sales of more than C\$6 billion, McCain's Appleton, Wis., plant ships more than 130 million lbs. of frozen appetizers per year. A 24-hour, 5-day-a-week facility, Appleton is also home to the Technology Center, a state-of-the-art research and development center and a microbiology lab.

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Headquartered in Green Bay, Wis., Yale Materials Handling – Green Bay is one of the Midwest's premier materials handling companies. Founded in 1985, YMH – Green Bay has expanded its locations by adding branches in Stevens Point and Marinette, Wis., to better serve its Wisconsin and Michigan clients.

McCain partnered with YMH – Green Bay in 1990.

CHALLENGE

McCain realized that they were losing valuable production time as a result of their 20 electric lift trucks' battery needs. As a

three-shift operation, three fully charged batteries were required per truck to meet daily demands. In an effort to maintain uptime between shifts, the resulting 60 batteries were stored at the plant – posing environmental and safety hazard risks for employees.



McCain was uncertain if their fleet of electric and Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) lift trucks and motorized walkies were optimized for their needs. In McCain's frozen foods facility, their lift trucks endured some very tough and challenging operations.

SOLUTION

YMH – Green Bay provided McCain with cutting-edge technology and introduced them to opportunity battery charging.

“Two years ago, we teamed with YMH – Green Bay to help us understand and maximize our lift truck fleet’s capabilities,” said Alfredo Villarreal, regional warehouse manager, McCain Foods. “They assisted with gathering data to help us better ascertain our needs and make the necessary adjustments for our facility to be as cost effective as possible.”

YMH – Green Bay ran time studies to help McCain identify how long their operators were running their Yale lift trucks on a per shift basis. The data helped synopsise McCain’s demand in regard to usage with a set amount of time equating to a specified number of loads. YMH – Green Bay helped McCain consolidate and eliminate extra equipment based on the number of hours the lift trucks ran, resulting in cost savings and better facility energy efficiency.

After a review of McCain’s battery usage, YMH – Green Bay introduced opportunity battery charging technology. This technology allows operators the opportunity to recharge their battery and top off its charge at any time without having to remove the battery from the lift truck.



IMPACT

By using opportunity battery charging, McCain no longer needed operators to charge batteries prior to their shift. With this technology, McCain eliminated 10 battery chargers and reduced the need for three batteries per truck to one battery per truck that lasted throughout the three-shift duration. As a result, McCain consolidated its total batteries from 60 to 20.

“YMH – Green Bay allowed us to change the way we charged our conventional batteries,” said Villarreal. “By moving to the new cutting-edge technology, our batteries could be charged in the truck more often without damage. The difference between an 8-hour charge time and 15 minutes during an operator’s break affects our bottom line.”

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Today, the McCain Appleton plant’s lift truck fleet consists of 27 Yale lift trucks. McCain purchased two ICE lift trucks, one GLC40AF and GLP60TG respectively, three ERP040TH, four ERC050VG and nine ESC040FA electric rider lift trucks, one MPE080LE, five MPE060LF and one MPE080LC end riders and two MPW050LE motorized walkies.

“YMH – Green Bay saved us money, while increasing our equipment’s productivity,” continued Villarreal. “With fewer batteries to maintain and store, our employees are truly able to dedicate their time to getting the job done. In addition, our plant’s safety and energy efficiencies have increased.”

