



Spirax Sarco steam system audit helps Dairy Crest achieve “stretched” 18% energy target

Dairy Crest reduced gas consumption at its Kirkby factory by 18%, thanks to a combination of energy saving measures, including a range of steam system improvements recommended by Spirax Sarco. Steam system optimisation played a major role in achieving the overall savings, leading to an extremely rapid payback for Spirax Sarco’s audit. “In terms of payback we’re talking months not years,” says Dairy Crest Engineering Manager Gordon Davies.

“It was also useful to bring in Spirax Sarco to release our engineers who are mainly tasked with core activities like keeping the production lines running,” he explains. “In our busy manufacturing environment, some of the steam system jobs are pretty low on our day-to-day priority list so we decided to ask Spirax Sarco to do a full audit. We worked in partnership with them on the recommendations and together we met our stretched energy targets for the past two years.”

One of the big improvements was raising the temperature in the boiler feedtank, from between 79 and 82°C, to 96°C. As a rule of thumb, increasing the temperature of the feed to a boiler by 6°C reduces the boiler’s energy consumption by 1%, so this alone will have yielded savings of at least 2%.

Condensate recovery was another area that produced big results, raising the proportion of hot, treated water recycled back to the boiler from 76% to between 94 and 95%.

In addition, the steam system audit highlighted a variety of other energy saving measures, such as repairing and installing insulation, improving the blowdown control on the

boiler and repairing or replacing any malfunctioning steam traps. The Spirax Sarco engineers compiled an asset list of all steam traps around the site and Dairy Crest has now engaged Spirax Sarco to carry out an annual inspection and service across the entire population.

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“It’s been a very good relationship and long may it continue,” says Mr. Davies. “Since the initial savings we have seen another 8% energy savings for 2009. This was helped by the annual Spirax Sarco steam survey, which identifies potential problems and reduces slippage with regards to energy savings.”

Dairy Crest’s Kirkby site in Liverpool manufactures well-known branded spreads, such as Utterly Butterly, Clover and Vitalite.

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