

## CASE HISTORY

# The AZEK Company Reduces Housekeeping Costs and Creates a Safer Workplace with SonicAire Fans

### Working in a Cloud of Dust

At The AZEK Company's plant in Scranton, PA, dust was a continual problem. In this location, employees work to mix powders for PVC Sheets and Composite Lumber. The result was a 50' tall blending tower inundated with flammable dust. Floating in the air, resting on surfaces, the dust wasn't just a compliance issue. It was also a significant health concern for employees.

To curb the perpetual dust buildup, staff spent time cleaning instead of focusing on more critical tasks. Between the floating particulate, the slip hazards caused by settling dust, and impending insurance premium increases, management knew it needed to act.

**"It was hurting the bottom line," Tom Matechik, Manufacturing Engineer at The AZEK Company, said. "With the tower standing 50' high, it's difficult to clean without the right equipment."** The complicated layout meant that in some places, 1/4-1/2" of dust could build up before housekeeping was able to deal with it. They received a quote for one-time cleaning of flat surfaces at the cost of \$36,000. Knowing this level of cleaning would be required multiple times per year, adding this line item to the budget wasn't a wise long-term financial decision.

### Engineering the Ideal Solution

That's when The AZEK Company met SonicAire. Territory Sales Manager, Andy Dunn, was brought in to survey the facility. Upon his visit, he commented that "When you walked into the tower, you could look up and see a halo around the lights caused by the dust in the air."

Working with Tom Matechik and other company representatives, SonicAire's Engineering Department drew up plans for the multi-floor building. Unlike traditional



facilities, **vertical blending towers require specific fan placement to keep dust away from overhead spaces.**

According to Taylor Andrews, Engineering Manager at SonicAire, "These projects are more complicated to lay out because we're working with much smaller areas. The drawings have to convey how the fans will be positioned horizontally and vertically to mitigate fugitive dust issues. In addition, mezzanine and scaffolding structures often create tight spaces for installation and require that each fan have a unique oscillation setting."

SonicAire specified ten Pro-200 fans which the company installed beginning in late October 2020. Following a few adjustments to the installation, The AZEK Company fired up the fans on a Friday evening. Matechik stopped by the facility over the weekend to monitor the progress. The amount of dust floating down to the floor was significant. **By Monday morning, all of the horizontal surfaces in the tower were clean, and staff just had to sweep up the floor.**

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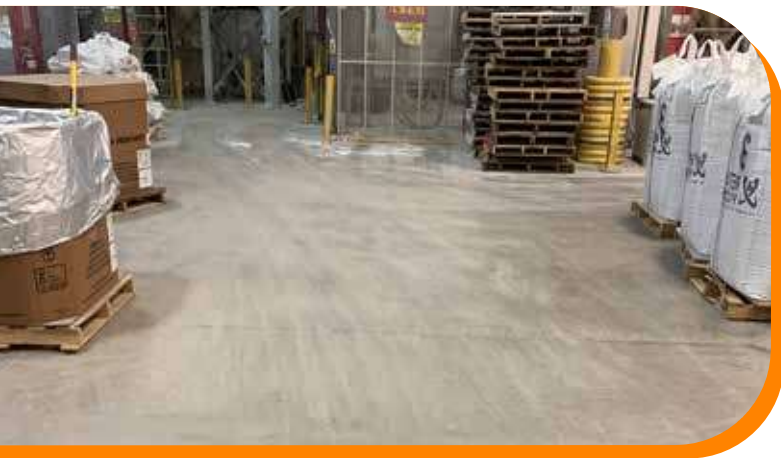


## A Cleaner, Safer Plant

Today, Dust Control Fans run continuously in the blending tower. Since dust no longer builds up on flat surfaces, employees now sweep it up from the floor during periodic cleanings. All told, **SonicAire fans will save the company hundreds of thousands of dollars in housekeeping costs in the years to come.**

Most importantly, employees are much happier and safer. Instead of working in a cloud of dust, they're in clean air. Dunn noted upon his return, "Now you can see the lights clearly. The air is so much cleaner." And without dust buildup on walkways, slip hazards have been eliminated.

The AZEK Company was so happy with the results in the Scranton plant that they ordered additional fans for another location. **"I have nothing but positive things to say about the SonicAire fans," Matechik commented. "They're doing exactly what Andy Dunn said they would do."**



## SonicAire Solutions for Powder and Bulk Solids

Powder and Bulk Solids 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 to show how our BarrierAire™ technology will reduce combustible dust accumulation. Once installed, our dust control fans eliminate the excessive dust buildup in hard-to-reach areas, minimizing the cost of housekeeping, improving worker safety and productivity while keeping your facility compliant with OSHA and NFPA regulations.



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