

NO GLOW - JUST WASH AND DRY



When it comes to ensuring that their lorry fleet was free of radiation contamination, British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL), turned to worldwide moisture control specialists Munters to help maintain safety levels. Through its desiccant dehumidification technology, Munters were able to play a key role in maintaining the

integrity of vehicles that transport nuclear fuel around the country.

Vehicles from BNFL's Springfield division make over 50 journeys a week, transporting nuclear fuel to reactor power stations around the UK and Europe. Because they travel on public highways their safety standards have to be second-to-none, often involving fire and drop tests on the giant flasks that contain the material while it is in transit.

When these articulated lorries return from a trip they are washed down to remove any residual radiation, and before they can be used again they must be checked by a Geiger counter. To ensure that readings from the Geiger counter are 100% correct, it is imperative that the vehicles are completely dry. To organise this, BNFL called in Munters to advise on the most secure way to achieve exact results, and they recommended dehumidifying the air in the garage where the vehicles are kept overnight.

BNFL Project Manager John Cooper has worked within the nuclear industry for many years, and is well aware of the importance of safety. He said: "In over 40 years of road transport there has never been a harmful release of activity, we wanted to continue this record and looked around for ways to improve our procedures. Prior to Munters involvement we used to let the vehicles dry naturally, but this could take up to two days or more.

An initial idea to resolve the problem involved heating the garage which would result in high energy bills and maintenance costs. However, this method was discounted when Munters put forward a scheme that would keep the garage

temperature at ambient, whilst cutting the whole drying process time down by 50%, thoroughly drying the vehicles in just one night. Heating the same space to remove the moisture would carry an energy cost of approximately 200% more than desiccant dehumidification. To do this Munters installed two MXT2100 desiccant dehumidifiers that dry the lorries and moist air in the garage by, keeping the relative humidity of the garage at 45%.

Munters dehumidifiers work by passing the moist air through a slowly revolving, desiccant impregnated, honeycomb wheel. The resultant dry air is then simply pumped back into the garage, gradually replacing moist air with controlled dry air.

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