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number 4

## *Creating a duct system that is functional and decorative*





**McGill AirFlow worked with Corn States Metal Fabricators to create a duct system with an industrial look that effectively heats and cools a large, open area.**

Turning a duct system into an art form. Sounds intimidating, but McGill AirFlow Corporation and Corn States Metal Fabricators successfully met this challenge, and helped Praxair win several architectural design awards for their distribution headquarters.

Praxair had previously converted a 4,500-square-foot warehouse into office space, and that project set the design theme for the distribution headquarters. Praxair, a welding supplies company, used a welding product/industrial theme throughout the building. This was both functional and decorative, and carried over into all aspects of the interior design and furnishings: tables were designed using pipe or empty gas cylinders; ductwork, metal beams, and rivets were exposed; and galvanized metal peg boards were constructed as walls in some areas.

In the new project, a 58,000-square-foot warehouse was converted into a distribution/processing center for Praxair. One-third of this space was designated as an office, conference, and training area, and the remaining two-thirds of the building became the warehouse and distribution area. In an effort to unify the different functions in the building, most of the warehouse was kept very open; the entire shell remained exposed. This was done to simplify design, and also to help eliminate the division between management and staff.

Corn States Metal Fabricators of West Des Moines, Iowa, was awarded the contract to design and provide the HVAC system for the renovated building. Designing an effective and efficient heating and cooling system for a large building with high ceilings and wide open spaces is a difficult task in itself, but Doug Golay, project manager for Corn States, also had to keep in mind the "look" of the building when designing this system. Doug had worked with McGill AirFlow on projects in the past, and was familiar with the high-quality ductwork and duct

accessories manufactured by the company. He was also pleased with the service he'd gotten from the staff at McGill AirFlow's Duct Express™ warehouse in Grinnell, Iowa. When design work was completed, he contacted McGill AirFlow's sales staff, and forwarded his drawings of the system for the staff's review.

After taking the design theme into consideration, McGill AirFlow was faced with the same challenges that Corn States dealt with when designing the system: recommending ductwork that fit the industrial design theme and contributed to an efficient air handling system. The selection of the ductwork was important, because it had to fit the style of the building. McGill AirFlow sales staff visited the warehouse before renovation, to get a feel for the open spaces, high ceilings, and floor plan. They also visited the offices in the previously renovated warehouse. Here, they were able to see firsthand how all parts of the project were expected to come together.

A duct package proposal was submitted to Corn States. It included close to 1,500 feet of spiral duct made of G60 galvanized steel in 6-, 10-, and 12-foot sections, with diameters of 8, 10, 12, 16, 18, and 22 inches. Fittings were spot-welded and sealed, or standing seam construction was used in this exposed application. Gored elbows, stamped elbows, loose conical 90° taps, loose LO-LOSS™ taps, end caps, reducers, and couplings were also included in the duct package. Corn States and Praxair were sold on McGill AirFlow's recommendation of spiral duct, and do not regret this decision.

"Praxair is absolutely thrilled with the HVAC system. It fits into the design of the work space, and there have been no problems with the system," Doug Golay said.

This renovation has earned national recognition, as well. The Praxair Distribution project earned the coveted *Business Week/Architectural Record* award in 1998, and won the Central States Region Honor Award for Renovation/Adaptive Reuse and the AIA Iowa Honor Award of Excellence, both in 1996. This project has been featured in *Iowa Architect*, *Business Week*, and the *Des Moines Register*, and McGill AirFlow's exposed ductwork is prominent in many of the photographs included in these articles.

Doug Golay's trust in McGill AirFlow's product knowledge, sense of aesthetics, and quality products led to a successful renovation for Praxair Distribution. In locations across the nation, McGill AirFlow's sales teams are ready to earn your trust, and to help turn your next project into an award-winner.

**McGill AirFlow Corporation**

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