

Midwest Laboratories

(Omaha, Nebraska) - Founded in 1975, Midwest Laboratories analyzes the components of many different items—from soil, to plant tissue, to dog food, and much more. The processes of testing the items vary, depending on the sample being tested. Government, private organizations, and the public all take advantage of the lab's services and can request testing of any product for a reasonable price. In addition to in-house testing, Midwest Laboratories professionals take their talents to the field.

Control Services (an authorized KMC partner) has placed many KMC products within four of the campus buildings to control and maintain the correct atmosphere for the testing facilities. With the help of Control Services, the laboratory was able to easily add the KMC system into already existing controls in the facilities.

According to John DeBoer, the Chief Administrative Officer / Vice President of Midwest Laboratories, "We have a very good relationship with Control Services. They are willing to bend over backwards to ensure that our system works to the degree that we expect. Everything that I have ever asked of Control Services was completed with extremely high-quality of service and in a timely manner."

KMC products are, of course, used for the basic environmental control of the buildings. In addition, however, these products control pumps, drying ovens, lab incubators, and refrigeration equipment. The controls are even sophisticated enough to command valves in the laboratories that mix water to a predetermined temperature.



"Being a laboratory we have many coolers, incubators, and critical operations that need monitoring, and, in fact, are monitored by the KMC system," continued Mr. DeBoer. "The system e-mails several cell phones whenever there is a problem within the campus. It also informs us whenever there is a process that is not operating correctly, and in many cases I am able to correct the problem from my computer at home. We even have a computer which keeps contacting the KMC system every five minutes to make sure that the system is still monitoring everything. If that computer cannot get a response from the KMC system for five minutes then it, in turn, informs us that we have lost communication from the KMC system by e-mailing our cell phones."

The controls are easily operated from many locations and data can be obtained without much effort. The information is collected through the individual, programmable, LAN-based controls located in each facility and organized in the WinControl® operator workstation residing on the WAN. In this fashion, a centrally located operator is able to keep tabs on the entire campus. Reports can, then, be generated to evaluate individual building performance. Midwest Laboratories takes advantage of the software's organizational capabilities by using it to make the log books for the required collection of temperatures in the incubators.

Mickey Schroeder, PE, of Control Services explains how the system design has fulfilled the upfront goals of his customer: “The peer-to-peer digital hardware means reliable operation within each facility. There is no single point of failure that could affect the entire system. Centralized control through WinControl means that the customer saved in installation costs and has the convenience of conducting the majority of control-related duties from one desktop. Finally, the backwards compatibility of the KMC product means that the customer can continue to improve building operations without fear of costly updates.”

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