

Oklahoma-based company is clearing the air for many wrestling programs



Hi-Tech Air Solutions Model 110 can be found in wrestling rooms across the country.

Ray Robison readily admits he didn't exactly know what he was getting into.

In 2011, serious Mississippi River flooding hit Greenville, Miss., flooding a courthouse. Robison and HI-Tech Air Solutions arrived and placed a high-powered air reactor in the building's basement, designed to destroy odor the flood had left behind.

Two weeks later, officials called and said the odor was gone. "Leave the machine running," Robison replied.

Two more weeks passed, and they called again. A huge black mold spot left by the flood on the wall had disappeared, too; an entirely unexpected result.

At that point, Robison knew he had something special.

Major university research confirmed it, and Hi-Tech was on its way. Robison now runs a company that works with major Division I wrestling programs, high school programs and hospitals, among other outlets, to cleanse air and prevent both skin-borne and internal illnesses.

"We started this and stumbled into it, really," he said. "Going out there, we decided, 'Let's work on this. Will it (be effective)? We don't know. Let's try it. It was. It's gone above and beyond what we expected.'"

How does it work? The reactor features a filter, or reactor pad. Air goes into the machine, and UV rays separate molecules and attach them to different-colored rays, tearing down their molecular structure.

It produces ions known as OH radicals, which, in Robison's words, "goes on a seek-and-destroy mission" against smoke, odors, bacteria and mold.

It goes after molecules on walls, wrestling mats, clothes and headgear. It produces a positive and negative charge and can work for between four and six weeks. The Technosite reactor can reduce bacteria and virus cells up to 99.7 percent, decomposing bacteria, fungi, virus and mold in the process.

Major programs have taken notice. Oklahoma State and

By Greg Wallace

coach John Smith have purchased multiple Model 110 units (the largest commercial unit HI-Tech manufactures), which retail at \$5995 each, for its wrestling room and locker room.

Before installing the unit, Oklahoma State had evidence of four different kinds of mold in its facility. With the unit in operation, all four have been eradicated. In addition, per Robison, Smith says that Oklahoma State's skin infection rate has dropped by 95 percent, and incidences of cold and flu have been nonexistent.

"He realized how big of a problem it was," Robison said of Smith. "It was really going to help, but it exceeded expectations. We never dreamed it would help as much as it has. They're just ecstatic."

Wrestling rooms and locker rooms consistently feature close contact, and thus are havens for

skin illnesses and viruses. HI-Tech's machines combat that, Robison said.

"You want a safe haven," he said. "If you have it in the locker room, it doesn't smell like the locker room anymore. It takes the odor out. You hang your gear up, workout shoes and headgear and put it there with the machine blowing on it, it works."

"With the OH radicals it expels, you can go to science class, be exposed to 13 people with the flu and not come down with it. We've had people say they've associated with someone with the flu and felt like they were coming down with it and it disappeared."

The word is spreading. Iowa and Iowa State have both bought units for their programs, as has the University of Central Oklahoma. High school programs across Oklahoma (HI-Tech is based in Moore) have bought units, as have programs

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in Kentucky. In addition, NFL and NBA teams have inquired about the products.

Robison said the incidences of staph, ringworm, impetigo and other skin-related illnesses have dropped dramatically with the machines' presence. Robison said one wrestler in Kentucky saw his staph infection clear up completely after spending four days with the machine.

"He wanted to re-name it the Staph 6000," Robison joked.

It also works in hospitals. Robison took a unit to a Fort Worth, Texas, hospital that was experiencing a serious staph outbreak with patients in quarantine. He loaned the machine, but five days later, the hospital administrator was so impressed that he offered to write a blank check to buy a machine right there.

The next step for HI-Tech, Robison said, is making sure that supply can meet an increasing demand.

"We've spent five years with research, development and engineering, testing and spending a lot of money," he said. "We want to spend the next two years building inventory and operating capital."

"One of the worst things we can say is 'back-ordered.'" There was a school in Florida that wanted to buy about \$60,000 worth of equipment and asked, 'Are these in stock?' Yes. We've wanted to do that for a couple years. We're on the verge of exponential growth." ■