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Food firm protects factory with sprinkler system

Award-winning food firm Tillery Valley has invested £336,000 in a state of the art sprinkler system to further improve safety measures at their Abertillery production plant.

Cardiff based Focused Project Engineering Limited were selected to manage the installation of the high-tech system and worked closely with the operations team at Tillery Valley to develop a tailored solution to meet the complex needs of the food production facility. Another South Wales firm, Bridgend-based building services contractor, Highland Services Ltd, provided the thermal insulation and trace heating system required for the extensive network of pipes and control valves.

South Wales firm Tillery Valley employs more than 350 people at their site in Abertillery. Its advanced production plant has the capacity to produce one million meals per week. These meals are delivered daily to schools, hospitals, care homes and local authorities.

Providing water-based fire sprinkler protection to a food production plant, including large warehouse type freezers with artic like temperatures approaching -30 degree Celsius, was a major technical challenge, particularly when daily food production could not be halted or interrupted.

Operations Manager at Tillery Valley, Jeff Dunlop said: "We continually strive to have the optimum safety standards onsite. Our accident rate has decreased by 50% over the last three years as part of a focused programme to drive down risk on the factory floor. This recent investment fits in with our wider programme and is an investment in our staff and in long-term business efficiency. Tillery Valley is very pleased to have had this state of the art system installed and also to have been able to complete the project using Welsh-based businesses for the majority of the works".

Mark Edwards, Director at Focused Project Engineering said: "the key to success on the project was understanding that the customer still needed to safely make 200,000 meals a day, whilst the 800 metres of pipework and 2,000 metres of pipework insulation, was installed. We provide specialist project engineering services to the food industry and work with clients all over the UK. It was a pleasure to work with Tillery Valley to provide this bespoke service."