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CASE STUDY: BOULDERING PROJECT

PARTNERING WITH A LEADING CLIMBING GYM AND FITNESS CENTER TO REDUCE ANNUAL FILTER WASTE BY 15 TONS.

THE FILTRATION CHALLENGE AT BOULDERING PROJECT

The Bouldering Project, headquartered in Seattle with 12 locations nationwide, is a nationally recognized indoor bouldering gym where climbing enthusiasts go to climb, train, exercise, and practice yoga. Their facilities are typically located in densely populated urban environments, with high occupancy at peak hours creating a significant amount of chalk dust that must be filtered efficiently and effectively to maintain a safe and pleasant experience for climbers.

At Bouldering Project's small facilities, the number of filters needed per replacement cycle could be as few as 6 in the RTU for the building. In contrast, larger facilities, like the Springdale gym in Austin, 11 RTU's continuously run to keep the building cool and over 60 filters keep customers breathing easy with clean air.

Bouldering Project's filtration challenge is unique in that the volume of particulate they are filtering is massive – enough to be measured in kilograms per day – and the frequency with which they change filters to maintain an enjoyable experience for members is very high – up to 2 times a week in the driest and dustiest times of year.



“Sustainability has three components: Economic, Environmental and Social – This makes sense for us on the Economic side because we'll see payback in less than 12 months. On the Environmental front, we are removing 15 tons of waste from the landfill every year. And on the social side, we are helping create a better experience for the members of the community that use our space. Ticks all the boxes”



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PROBLEM:

Until 2024, the Bouldering Project filtered their air the same as any other company: by purchasing and replacing legacy single-use filters and disposing of them in the landfill. The process racked up sizeable operational expenses as Bouldering Project continuously purchased filters to replace the old ones. In fact, in 2023 Bouldering Project purchased and disposed of over 14,000 filters at an average cost of about \$10 per filter, generating about 15 tons of mass to landfill and about \$150,000 off their bottom line.

As a company that prides itself as being a responsible participant in the climbing community, Bouldering Project recognized that their large contribution of mass to the landfill was unacceptable. Bouldering Project prides itself on it's superior gym experience, continuously investing to improve the overall gym experience at their facilities – \$150,000 per year is money that would be well spent to better the experience and facilities and provide more community support.

SOLUTION:

K&N's High-Flow Washable Filters are and were the perfect solution to help reduce Bouldering Project's operational expenses and minimize their impact to the landfill. Starting with a small PILOT of 6 filters, in one air handler at a single facility, K&N was able to demonstrate equal/or better filtration with their washable reusable product.

Bouldering Project facility managers integrated the filter washing process into their existing workflows and the PILOT yielded immediate savings on filter purchases at the facility. The PILOT expanded to a larger facility with consistent results as the pilot scaled and in the spring of 2024 Bouldering Project rolled out K&N Washable HVAC filters to all their facilities nationwide.

KEY RESULTS:

Investment Payback

- Payback Period: Less than 12 Months

Long Term Savings

- 5 Year Estimated Savings: \$500,000

Waste Diversion

- Annual Waste Diversion of 14,000 Filters (15 Tons)



Passionate about sustainability? Let's talk: nowaste@knfilters

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