



# FLEXAUST

## The Integrity Driven Solution

New 50,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Las Vegas facility.

*Flexaust has had a rich history of innovation, since its founding in 1938. Celebrating over 80 years in the hose and ducting business, the global company is no stranger to turbulence in the industry. As a world leader in the design and production of industrial and commercial applications involving air, dust, fume and lightweight material, Flexaust has maintained stability and continued to offer new technology driven products that allow them to persevere in the face of uncertainty.*

*Hose + Coupling World had the pleasure of speaking with Mike Harvey, Vice President/General Manager; Richard Meyer, CEO of Schauenburg Hose Group; Mike O'Brien, Vice President of Sales & Marketing; and Susanna Vandenberg, Marketing Manager at Flexaust, concerning the success of the company's recent expansions, its continued commitment to growth, and how it puts the customer at the forefront of its decisions.*

*By Angelica Pajkovic*

Flexaust's origin dates back to the 1930s, when Harold Hersey, a mining engineer from Arizona, developed a flexible hose constructed of neoprene-coated cotton adhered to wire. The hose system allowed for dangerous fumes to be vented out of the tunnels and fresh air to be brought in to the working miners. The flourishing industrial sector, triggered by World War II, led the company to transition from mining to industrial applications, where it progressed to support the ducting and hose industries. Now the largest company within the Schauenburg Hose Technology Group, Flexaust

has a world-wide presence, serving markets in North America, South and Central America, Canada and Australia. "With the combined support of our affiliate companies in Germany, France, China, and Canada we are able to cater to a wide array of markets," stated O'Brien. "The exciting part of what we do every day is that nothing is ever the same. Depending on the region we are in, or what industry is booming at the time, we could be focused on agriculture, wood working, ship building, marine applications, vacuums or respirator hoses," he continued.



in various locations allows Flexaust to efficiently offer solutions to its customers in any geographical area; they seldom have to wait because we do not have capacity on a machine."

Today, Flexaust has modernized its ways of managing the business. This has been an ongoing transformation to alter its plant footprint, restructure the businesses and plant organizations, reduce lead times by reducing non-strategic machining, and continue the modernization of all systems.

"We have expanded not only physically with locations, but internally as well," explained Harvey. "By investing into our engineering team and separating human capital so that individuals are assigned to more focused tasks, we have been able to consistently come up with new, innovative products and solutions," he continued. In the past four years, the number of people in technology driven departments has quadrupled from 4 to 12, to 16, which has had a substantial impact on Flexaust's offerings. "Not only does it aid the company to be better aligned with its customers' needs, it also ensures that Flexaust employees are able to focus their unique skills on the projects that are most suited to their strengths. This way we are able to guarantee that each product is of the highest quality," added Meyer.

The company's longevity has been attributed to their commitment to technology and innovation, while also recognizing the varied needs of their customers worldwide. Combined with the streamlined processes necessary to meet or exceed customers' needs in a timely manner, Flexaust has established itself as a world leader in flexible hose and ducting.

### Streamlined Services

With four locations totalling almost 300,000 ft<sup>2</sup> in Indiana, 50,000 ft<sup>2</sup> in Massachusetts, a new 50,000 ft<sup>2</sup> location in Las Vegas and a recently renovated 50,000 ft<sup>2</sup> space in North Carolina, Flexaust has positioned itself to provide its customers with fast, reliable service for a complete line of commercial and industrial hoses. "In 2018 we mentioned that we were in the process of adding new locations to expand our business and better serve our customers, and that is exactly what we have done," stated Harvey. "Our newest facility opened in January of 2020, and by the third week of February we had run our first hose," continued Meyer. "With facilities that host 20 different hose making processes, including fabric and extrusion based processes, the decision to strategically place plants



Hose coiler – Flex-Tube® PU.





Sewer & septic vacuum hose.

**Expanding Product Capabilities**

Flexaust continues to embrace the innovative and entrepreneurial spirit that has been the cornerstone of the company’s management from the beginning, while improving and updating the applications in place. With a wide selection of products including: wire reinforced fabric and plastic hoses, plastic wet and dry vacuum hoses, blow molded corrugated tubing, and hand-bendable metal ducting, customers

can choose the hose that will be the best fit for the intended application. The newest additions to the company’s family of products are the FLEX-TUBE VR-U and MG-U-SD (Or MG-Stay Safe).

The FLEX-TUBE VR-U (vapor recovery hose) was designed to be used during the delivery of gas to service stations. It is constructed with enclosed copper helix and static dissipative polyurethane to offset any buildup of static charge that could potentially cause an explosion. To mitigate any risk of accidents, the VR-U hose is used to extract the vapors in the empty gas tank as the tank is refilled with gas.

The MG-U-SD (MG-Stay Safe) was developed to service most explosion vacuums that are used in pharmaceutical, powder coating, bakeries, plastic & resin production, general manufacturing, and woodworking applications, when safety from buildup is important. The MG-U-SD (MG-Stay Safe) is built with wire reinforced static dissipative polyurethane with conductive over molded cuffs on each end.

As there is a constant effort to refine its processes, by being aware of current industry needs and investing in new equipment, Flexaust is able to continually expand the opportunity of what its process can offer. “Both of these new products were designed after our sales force listened to our customers,” stated O’Brien. “The hoses previously used in these applications needed improvements for safety purposes. So, we learned all of the pain points, discussed solutions



Commercial leaf vacuum hose.



*Large diameter ventilation hose.*

with our engineering team, and then made the necessary adjustments. This is just one of the ways that Flexaust makes sure that the customer is at the front of every decision it makes.”

Operating in accordance with the latest ISO 900 standards, Flexaust excels in its quality assurance programs as well as its customer service offerings. Numerous testing procedures for incoming raw materials, and a wide range of quality and equipment tests and assurance systems, highlight the quality and depth of the company’s engineering capabilities. These assurances, in tandem with the high value placed on building long-term relationships with its distributors, customers, and end users makes Flexaust a highly trusted source for industrial hoses.

#### **No Risk, No Fun**

The No Risk, No Fun mantra upheld by Flexaust since its inception, has allowed the company to maintain a distinct advantage over its competitors. Where other industry focused companies might retract to uncertain times by downsizing or playing it safe, Flexaust does the exact opposite. By carrying on with expansions and maintaining its growth plans, the company is able to continue serving its customers without delay and provide essential services to end users.

“As we enter an incredibly changed and uncertain economy caused by COVID-19, we are thankful for the progress made in the past few months. The combination of all the actions that the company has

taken to ensure the safety of its employees coupled with our employees outstanding efforts to provide essential services to our community, is a testament to the team’s ability to uphold the integrity it has for each project it undertakes,” stated Vandenberg. Flexaust’s aim to persevere through trying times unthwarted, has led it to be a more agile and resilient company, that can exceed the ever changing needs of its clients.

#### **Engineered for the Future**

“The four strengths of Flexaust, that immediately come to mind are: its global presence, its philosophy for a slow and steady growth, its dedication to making decisions based on the value it offers customers, and the relationships it cultivates with each of its clients,” expressed O’Brien. “Our breadth of experience and our ability to solve the issue that clients bring to us, has earned Flexaust a deserving trust from our clients that cannot be undervalued,” he concluded.



*Burlington, NC facility.*

