

# Continental Tire Squeezes Savings from Compressed Air System

ActOnEnergy®



Every day, the Continental Tire plant in Mt. Vernon, Illinois, churns out 28,000 passenger tires and 8,000 truck tires using the same invisible element that keeps those tires inflated.

"We use compressed air throughout our entire manufacturing process—every machine out here," says Facility Engineer Greg Brown. "We inflate and test each tire at least three times before it leaves the plant."

Air compressors draw in and pressurize fresh air to perform an industrial job. Some of the air compressors at Continental Tire are as large as 900 horsepower.

To minimize energy waste with these massive machines, Continental Tire turned to Act On Energy and Power Supply Industries (PSI), a registered Act On Energy Program Ally. PSI began by conducting an in-depth retro commissioning study, with Act On Energy covering 80 percent of the costs through its Retro Commissioning Program.

"PSI did the initial survey of our entire facility—how and where we use compressed air and the effectiveness of our compressors—and came up with some recommendations," says Brown.

As a result of those recommendations, Continental has already repaired hundreds of air leaks and made piping changes that will allow compressors to operate at lower pressures and use less energy. Leak repairs alone have allowed Continental Tire to shut down one 900-horsepower compressor!

To help Continental implement the larger-scale recommendations made by PSI, Act On Energy provided more than \$236,000 through its Custom Incentive Program.

As a result of these efficiency improvements, Continental is already seeing annual savings of \$200,000—10 percent of their compressed air energy costs—and that figure is expected to grow.

In addition to eliminating waste and reducing expenses, Brown says Act On Energy helped the Mt. Vernon plant meet corporate energy reduction objectives.

"We had a very positive experience with Act On Energy; their team was very helpful," says Brown, who encourages other industrial companies to take a closer look at compressed air.

"Compressed air is the most expensive and least understood of plant utilities," says Act On Energy's David Gibson. "That's a bad combination that often leads to deferred maintenance and a lot of untapped opportunities."

But not at Continental Tire, where the savings keep rolling in.

## Benefits to Continental Tire:

- \$200,000 annual savings in compressed air energy costs
- \$236,160 in Act On Energy incentives reduced project paybacks by one year
- Nearly 6 million kilowatt-hours saved every year

*A typical plant in Ameren Illinois service territory can expect to see energy efficiency savings of more than 15 percent as a result of leak repairs alone!*



## Energy Efficiency: Where the Rubber Meets the Road

**Continental Tire:  
Compressed Air Energy Cost Savings**



### Act On Energy Program Allies: Your Partner in Savings

As compressed air experts, Power Supply Industries (PSI) helps manufacturing plants get the most from their air compressors. As a registered Act On Energy Program Ally, PSI helps in another way.

“As a Program Ally, our job is to help get the maximum Act On Energy incentives for the customer,” says Jim Timmersman of PSI.

Program Allies are familiar with Act On Energy incentives and program requirements, so they are a great resource in navigating the necessary paperwork.

“There was quite a bit of work involved, and PSI helped us meet all the hurdles,” says Greg Brown of Continental Tire. “The partnership was good for both sides.”

With Act On Energy incentives, PSI can perform an in-depth air study at greatly reduced cost.

“We look at how air is used, where it’s used and how it could be better utilized,” says Timmersman. “The study serves as a kind of cookbook to show the customer how to achieve savings.” Act On Energy can help you implement those recommendations for less, too.

“With the down economy, a lot of people don’t want to spend money on energy efficiency improvements,” says Timmersman. “But there’s no better time to make your company more efficient—you can reduce your fixed costs, add dollars to your bottom line, and help keep your company profitable.”

### Act On Energy Retro Commissioning and Custom Incentive Programs— Put Them to Work for You

#### Phase I — Compressed Air Retro Commissioning Program

To help manufacturing and industrial customers optimize the operation of their compressed air systems, this program typically defrays 50 to 80 percent of the costs of an energy efficiency study. The customer must commit to implement no-cost and low-cost projects identified in the study, which may include:

- Leak loss reduction
- Adjustment of an existing flow controller or sequencer to match plant operations
- Correction of inappropriate uses of compressed air such as open blowing

The retro commissioning survey may also identify capital improvement projects that might qualify for additional incentives through the Act On Energy Custom Program.

#### Phase 2 – Custom Incentive Program

This program provides incentives for larger capital projects with payback periods ranging from one to seven years.

### Energy efficiency. It’s good business.

Incentives are available for a variety of energy-saving projects, including lighting, heating and cooling, refrigeration, motors, VFDs, process improvements and compressed air.

#### Why wait?

Act On Energy—and save!

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