

“Before implementing the RTI solution, we had quite a few slips and falls due to oil on the floor. A pickle barrel covered in saran wrap isn’t exactly state of the art equipment. We have significantly reduced injuries due to oil spills with RTI. And, the results aren’t just soft. We reduced our oil usage from 1200 pounds per week to 760 pounds saving \$60,000 per year.”

Salvatore DiGilio
F&B Controller
Empire Casino

About Empire Casino

Yonkers Raceway was founded in 1899, as the Empire City Trotting Club. From 1907 through 1943, thoroughbreds replaced harness racing. Seabiscuit was one of the many famous thoroughbreds that graced this track. The Rooney Family acquired Yonkers Raceway in 1972 and renamed it Empire Casino at Yonkers raceway. In addition to the 5,300 slot and electronic table games, the family has maintained live harness racing for over 35 years.

Automated Cooking Oil Management Improves Property Operations & Safety

Business Challenge

Empire Casino in Yonkers, NY, has everything you could want in a gaming environment. With nine bars, four restaurants, a food court and an employee cafeteria, the need for efficiency across their kitchen operations is critical. But one aspect of their kitchen operations was far from efficient and Empire Casino knew they needed to make improvements in how they managed their fryer oil. Fresh oil arrived in Empire’s central warehouse in 35 pound plastic jugs. Each restaurant was then responsible for requisitioning the amount they needed from the warehouse each day. After the oil was used, the kitchen staff had to let it cool and then drain it from the fryers into 5 gallon pickle buckets. Then the Steward team loaded the buckets onto carts which were pushed onto freight elevators and hauled down to the loading dock to be dumped into the rendering tank. If the rendering tank was full, the buckets of oil would sit on the dock attracting pests, creating odors, and inviting spills when delivery trucks would pull up to the dock and bump into it causing the buckets to tip over. Empire Casino considered their oil management process to be the “most dangerous job” in the kitchen given the inherent risks that come with manually transporting and changing out hot fryer oil. They needed a better solution. And, they knew that they had to find a solution that would address the concerns of all parties impacted; kitchen staff that manages the oil filtering and change-outs, Stewards who transport and dispose used oil into the outdoor rendering tanks, facilities who cleans up oil spills, oil dumped down a drain and managing the waste removal, human resources who deals with workers compensation claims from oil related slips, falls and burns, and purchasing who manages the requisition and distribution process.

Solution

In order to service each of their restaurants and to achieve the efficiency improvements desired, Empire Casino turned to Restaurant Technologies, Inc. (RTI) for assistance. RTI specializes in helping the hospitality and casino industry create operational efficiencies in their kitchens while simultaneously improving their food quality, creating a safer and cleaner environment for their employees, and contributing to environmental sustainability efforts through the use of a turnkey automated oil management solution. RTI is the industry standard, the only national full service provider whose solution has been implemented in over twenty thousand customer kitchens nationwide.

1. **Automated Oil Management.** RTI automates the most dangerous and dirty job in the kitchen, with the push of button. RTI’s closed loop system is comprised of bulk fresh and waste tanks, roll-up filter boxes, and automated fresh delivery and waste pickup via a fill box connected to the exterior of the casino.
2. **Full Service Provider.** Empire Casino benefits from RTI’s zero capex and zero installation cost solution. Additionally, they receive 24/7 support, onsite technical support and all equipment maintenance, ongoing staff training, best practice consulting, daily oil use and filtration monitoring tracking and automated alerts to improve oil life and protect food quality, and used oil recycling credits (metered at delivery).
3. **Portable System.** RTI’s Portable system allows hotels and casinos to handle multi-kitchen facilities and complex floor plans. Given their unique floor plan, RTI worked with Empire Casino on a custom implementation which included (3) standard direct connect tank systems and (5) Portable systems. These Portable systems are parked near remote fryers to provide Add-Filter-Dispose services, until the time they need to add fresh oil and to empty waste oil at the central fill station (located near the loading docks).

Results

The new RTI automated oil management solution has greatly improved kitchen operations and positively impacted the casino’s bottom line via a 40% reduction in oil usage. Additional benefits include the following:

- Safer oil handling and improved labor efficiencies with automated-push button fresh, filter and dispose
- Web visibility to compliance of oil management SOPs helps to improve food quality and reduce oil usage
- Lower food costs are achieved by applying used cooking oil credits at the time of fresh oil deliveries
- Elimination of outdoor rendering tanks, an eyesore for any property and improved overall cleanliness
- Strong sustainability benefits of zero landfill and 100% recycling of used cooking oil to bio-diesel