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Chapter 38

INDUSTRIAL AIR CONDITIONING

Atmospheric Conditions Required, General Requirements, Classification of Problems, Control of Regain, Moisture Content and Regain, Conditioning and Drying, Control of Rate of Chemical Reaction, Control of Rate of Biochemical Reactions, Control Rate of Crystallization, Elimination of Static Electricity

IN the application of air conditioning to industrial processes, too much stress cannot be laid upon a thorough understanding by the air conditioning engineer of the problems involved. A complete knowledge of these problems is necessary before a satisfactory design can be made.

Individual processes and machines are changing rapidly and air conditions must be constantly revised to meet the new conditions.

ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS REQUIRED

The most desirable relative humidity during processing depends upon the product and the nature of the process. As far as the behavior of the material itself and its desired final condition are concerned, each material and process presents a different problem. The best relative humidity may range up to 100 per cent. Similarly the most desirable temperature may range between wide limits for different materials and treatments. Extremes in either relative humidity or temperature require relatively expensive equipment for maintaining these conditions automatically. In departments where people are working, their health, comfort, and productive efficiency must be considered and often a compromise between the optimum conditions for processing and those required for the comfort of the worker is desirable.

It is generally considered that relative humidities below 40 per cent are on the dry side, conducive to low regains, a brittle condition of fibrous materials, prevalence of static electricity, and a tendency toward dryness of the skin and membranes of human beings. At the other end of the scale, humidities above 80 per cent are relatively damp, conducive to high regains, extreme softness, and pliability.

Table 1 lists desirable temperatures and humidities for industrial processing. In using this table, care must be taken in qualifying the process. In preparing many materials, conditions are not maintained constantly, but different temperatures and humidities are held for varying lengths of time.