

Customer Story:

Sustainable Infection Prevention for Schools



 School District

 Salinas, CA

 42 units

5 high schools:

17 units

4 middle schools:

13 units

Large regional
occupation school:

3 units

Continuation high school:

3 units

Adult education center:

3 units

District Office:

3 units

The Challenge

Like many other school facilities leaders in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Virginia Boyce, Director of General Services at Salinas Union High School District, invested in enhanced disinfection technology to control the spread of the virus. In her case, electrostatic sprayers were the initial product of choice as they are known to be highly effective at destroying pathogens. She also made a significant effort to increase air quality across the district, including adding bipolar ionization to their HVAC systems.

However, as she evaluated her district's campuses, she recognized a few issues:

- Widespread use of electrostatic sprayers, which involves diluted pesticides, would counteract the work she had done to increase the quality of the air. Furthermore, Salinas Union High's HVAC company had identified rooms in older buildings that did not have fresh or circulated air. Electrostatic spraying technology would not be suitable for these rooms.
- Salinas Union High is known for its Regional Occupation Program, which multiple surrounding school districts use. This building has big classrooms with a lot of expensive equipment that would deteriorate if sprayed with chemicals (dental and medical labs; mechanical, welding and construction shops, etc.).
- Spraying requires a constant chemical refill cost and labor cost, which Virginia did not feel would be sustainable given the size of her district. For example, spraying a large space, such as an entire gymnasium or library, on an ongoing basis would be costly.

The Solution

Around this time, Virginia was invited by a nearby district to attend a demo that R-Zero was hosting. She learned about R-Zero's Arc device, which made hospital-grade UV-C disinfection technology financially and operationally accessible to schools for the first time. Arc would not only destroy over 99.99% of pathogens in a 1,000 ft² room in 7 minutes, but also its low touch time would allow staff to be productive in other areas while the device was running. A few of Arc's key benefits caught Virginia's attention:



Safer than chemicals

Importantly, UV-C is just light, so it would be a greener, eco-friendly solution than her alternatives. Humans can immediately re-enter a room after a UV-C cycle is complete, while they must wait up to three hours after spraying for the chemicals to dissipate. UV-C is also safe to use in all spaces, including around food, water, paper goods, furniture, electronics, and other equipment.



Labor-Efficient

Disinfecting large spaces with sprayers would require a large, extended custodial team. Even effective manual disinfection would add 20 minutes of labor time per classroom, which she knew would not be sustainable. Arc, on the other hand, would fit seamlessly into existing cleaning workflows, allowing the existing custodial team to keep the whole campus safe.



CARES Act and SPURR Eligible

As Arc is an eligible "disinfection services and equipment" expense under the CARES Act, Virginia would be able to quickly secure funding for Arc devices to cover her entire district. Furthermore, Arc was a part of the SPURR Master Contract under Rexel Energy Solutions, meaning Salinas Union High would also be able to circumvent a public bid process and receive the technology sooner.

The Result

Following the initial demo, R-Zero's team set up another in-person meeting at Salinas High, attended by Virginia and her Chief Business Official, Ana Aguillon. After discussing the key benefits of Arc and the impact it would have on their operations and environment, they decided to propose the purchase of 42 Arc devices at the next board meeting.

While sprayers will be used for the exterior of the building and targeted high-touch surfaces, they will use Arc to disinfect the entire campuses daily, including classrooms, bathrooms, locker rooms, teachers lounges, and large spaces such as the library and cafeteria. They will also run the devices in the rooms with little airflow multiple times a day.



ABOUT R-ZERO

R-Zero is the first biosafety company dedicated to making hospital-grade disinfection solutions financially and operationally accessible to organizations of all shapes and sizes. Beginning with its touchless UV-C device, Arc, R-Zero's portfolio of products represents the next generation of best-in-class disinfection technologies.

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