

Case Study

Hollywood Theatre-Goers Warm to Upgrades, Renovation

Customer	Hollywood Theatre
Location	Portland, OR
Industry	Additional Markets
AERCO Product Installed	KC1000



What the Client Needed

The Hollywood Theatre renovation is transforming what was once considered the crown jewel of a Northeast Portland neighborhood into a revitalized hub of activity. The 1500-seat theater was built in 1926 in what was then the edge of the city. It emerged as a grand building and defined what became known as the city's Hollywood District. In 1997, FAO turned its attention to the Hollywood Theatre, purchasing the building and beginning urgent repairs. After three months of extensive work, theater doors reopened in November 1997, and FAO has kept them open ever since. Besides restoring the visual beauty of the Hollywood Theatre, more basic needs like repairing leaky roofs, falling plaster and replacing restroom fixtures often emerge as priorities.

In 2005, the theater's original 1926 oil-fired boiler took center stage. An analysis, conducted by Mike Hatten of SOLARC Architecture and Engineering and funded by Better Bricks, showed the system was only operating at 60 percent efficiency. In parts of the building, there was no working heat source at all. A significant boiler failure would close down the entire building and take away our income stream." FAO turned to the state's Energy Loan Program to help restructure its debt and structure a loan to cover the cost of installing an energy efficient, natural gas-fired system. Harder Mechanical replaced the boiler and added piping for natural gas.

AERCO's Solution

When installers found the new boiler would not pass through the narrow stairway to the basement, they used what anyone would use in an old theater – the stage's trap door. After removing plywood from the main auditorium walls, workers discovered the original large heat vents and determined they were still usable. Duct cleaning became a major task. "We discovered a number of surprises in this old building, but we tried to honor the building by using original ducts and vents where possible," said Bergstone Beer. "I've learned a lot more than I ever wanted to know about heating systems. What matters to us is not just preserving a beautiful historic building. Keeping our patrons warm and comfortable is a significant part of keeping the programs at the Hollywood Theatre thriving."

Return on Investment

The effects of the new heating system are already apparent. After installation was completed, ticket revenues increased 20 percent over the previous year's numbers.