

John G. Shedd Aquarium



“We were very excited about Dyson’s sound improvements around absorbing unpleasant frequencies with their new dB hand dryer.”

Bob Wengel
VP of Facilities

Built atop what used to be a landfill site, the John G. Shedd Aquarium first opened its doors in May of 1930. Today, it is one of the world’s largest indoor aquariums, home to more than 32,000 aquatic creatures from around the world.

In addition to its aquatic exhibits, Shedd hosts a variety of events – from weddings, to conferences, to large concerts. More than two million guests visit this historical landmark every year.



The Challenge

Shedd had recently launched an ambitious five-year strategic sustainability plan that covers everything from water and energy management to animal diets. In an effort to reduce waste as part of this initiative, Shedd had removed paper towels from guest restrooms and installed hand dryers. Soon enough, they began experiencing issues: during large events in the Oceanarium, a 3-million gallon saltwater re-creation of the Pacific Northwest coast, noise from the hand dryers would bleed out of the restroom and disturb guests. In fact, Shedd had gone as far as to turn the hand dryers off and provide paper towels for guests to dry their hands – negating their sustainability goals.

The Solution

Familiar with Airblade™ technology used in other Shedd restrooms, Robert Wengel, VP of Facilities, was excited to learn about Dyson’s sound improvements with the Dyson Airblade dB hand dryer. Dyson engineers significantly reduced air rush noise and incorporated Helmholtz silencers to absorb the unpleasant frequencies produced by the motor, making the Dyson Airblade dB hand dryer 50% quieter.¹

The Results

To combat the issue of noisy, disruptive dryers, Shedd partnered with Dyson to install Dyson Airblade dB hand dryers in its North and South lobby Oceanarium restrooms. “I believe that the dB hand dryer is going to have a positive effect on our guest experience,” Wengel observed. And guests agree: “Other hand dryers that I’ve seen in the past are very loud – ear piercing; but the Dyson is very quiet,” said one guest. “I could still hear my kids standing outside of the bathroom while the hand dryer was on. Normally, I never can,” another stated.

The Dyson Airblade dB hand dryer also contributes to Shedd’s sustainability efforts. “It’s a great way to continue to stay on that technological edge. Our guests can realize as they’re using them that... sustainability reaches every part of Shedd Aquarium including the restroom,” said Aislinn Gauchay, Manager of Great Lakes & Sustainability.

Acoustically re-engineered to reduce noise, the Dyson Airblade dB hand dryer has allowed Shedd to make sure that the only noise at their events is the sound of happy guests.

¹When compared to the original Dyson Airblade™ hand dryer.

To try the Dyson Airblade™ hand dryer or for more information call or visit:
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