

ELECTRONIC TRAP MONITORING

By Rob Erickson

Every now and then you come across a product that actually works as promised. A few years ago I received a call from a metal foundry that was experiencing raccoon problems. When I arrived at the job site, I could see that the surrounding area provided excellent raccoon habitat. There was a creek and a 10-acre section of woods, adjacent to the property. I asked the building manager if they had had raccoon problems in the past. He told me he had been there for over 15 years and the problem had been there at least that long.

The building had large vented roofs to allow the heat from the ovens to escape. I asked if they were ever closed, he replied that they were open all year. So much for trying to exclude the animals out. The animals access the warehouse and then move to the office area to have their young. The urine stains on the office ceiling were obvious and the smell was very strong.

Due to the fact that the roof was always open, my suggestion was to start a population reduction plan on the property. In the past, in areas that are over run with raccoons, I have had very good success using this option. The plan calls for gang setting with 8 to 10 traps for the first month or so, and then just a few traps set and baited for the entire year. The location was about 30 miles from me and in the opposite direction I normally travel. The first thing that came to my mind was Trap Smart. If you have followed my articles then you have heard me speak of electronic trap monitoring. Trap Smart's objective was to produce an automated, fail safe

methodology to notify the trapper as soon as an animal entered the trap. Extensive R&D has been performed to ensure that the product will work in most environmental conditions. The resulting product has been extensively tested by wildlife control professionals. At \$4.00 a gallon for gas and calculating the time it would take me to check every day, this one seemed like a no brainer.

I am not a paid spokesman nor do I receive any compensation from this company. I just feel that this tool is a game changer in our industry. I set the traps and attached the Trap Smart monitoring devices to the cages, and away I went. What this device allows you to do, is to add as many emails as you choose. When the trap is sprung the notifications go out instantly. So I added the plant manager, the shift

manager, and the maintenance supervisor. Now I have eyes on the ground to visually check to make sure the door is not just closed without an animal being caught.

Well every night for the first few weeks I had to remove trapped animals, which I expected. Since starting this project last year, I have never had to do anything to this unit! Nothing! For over a year Trap Smart has performed flawlessly, in rain, snow, -30 degrees, 100 degree heat. Well that says it all. It is not very often you come across a product that actually works as described, this one does. To date 67 raccoons, 9 skunks, 17 opossums, and a groundhog. This year was the first year the plant has not had a litter of young born there in over 15 years. Population reduction works, and so does Trap Smart. ■

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