



# Partnering for solutions

**Belmont Sausage Co. relies on Zer-O-Loc for assistance in facility design, new panels, and more.**

**B**elmont Sausage Co., Elk Grove Village, IL, which specializes in making a wide range of Eastern European sausages, began mass producing its products in August 2001, and business has been expanding ever since. Key to its continuing success is the company's newly renovated sausage processing plant.

Acquired in 2000, Belmont Sausage Co spent one year renovating this facility into a state-of-the-art, USDA meat processing plant. Along the way, Belmont had plenty of help from Zer-O-Loc, Canada's leading insulated panel manufacturer and distributor.

"Belmont Sausage Co. and Zer-O-Loc have had a long-standing relationship," says Lee Hawkins, Zero-O-Loc

Account Manager. "We first met in 2000 when Walter [Wally] Mulica, president of Belmont Sausage Co., asked us to be involved in the new processing plant he was building in Elk Grove Village."

Mulica met with Lee Hawkins at the existing plant and discussed what he was going to do with the new facility.

"We were very impressed with the quality of his products, and you could also tell by his existing plant that he places a premium on quality – just as Zer-O-Loc does," Hawkins says.

Zer-O-Loc ended up being the exclusive panel manufacturer that supplied Mulica with panels for his new facility.

"We supplied him with stainless steel panels for his smoke rooms," Hawkins explains. "We also supplied

him with our standard white pre-painted finished panels for his coolers and freezers. And then for the other areas where he was mixing products in a processing environment, which are very high wash-down areas, we provided him with FRP [Fiberglass Reinforced Plastic]-clad panels."

FRP is factory-bonded to the painted steel skins of Zer-O-Loc EPS (Expanded Polystyrene)-insulated panels.

"That project went very well," Hawkins says. "We both worked very well together to get the project completed. We also helped with the design of the plant – with respect to the panel finishes that would be applicable to the different environments."

## One-stop shop

Zer-O-Loc's Sales, Production, Drafting, and Design Departments offer design assistance from the inception to completion of each project. Where required, Zer-O-Loc will supply a complete set of shop drawings, complete with floor plans, elevations, and construction details, for approval upon receipt of the contract.

When asked why he chose Zer-O-Loc instead of competing panel vendors, Mulica says: "The number-one best

thing about their panels is they don't have wood in between their panels, and [the lack of wood] prevents moisture from forming. If you have moisture,

you provide a way for bacteria to grow. The second thing is it's very easy to install Zer-O-Loc's range of panels. With other coolers, if you're missing a couple of pieces that requires a lot of work to put it all together."

Zer-O-Loc offers a range of panel choices including EPS insulated panels, stainless steel panels, as well as insulated doors and factory-applied FRP. Zer-O-Loc supplied the insulated panels, and supervised the installation at Belmont Sausage Co.'s new plant.

"This was my first installation with Zer-O-Loc, and I was very happy with the service they provided," Mulica says. "When they tell you they will be done in three weeks, they're done in three weeks. You tell them what you want, you tell them the dimensions, they do

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the drawings and send them to you, you review it, approve it, and sign out. The next thing is the shipment, installment, payment, and that's it. They're very reliable."

### Partnership is growing

Zer-O-Loc has since completed other projects for Belmont Sausage Co.

"We supplied him with more panels for one of his grocery store locations, and then we supplied him with insulated panels for coolers and freezers for his new grocery store distribution warehouse," Hawkins says. "Just last week we provided him with another freezer for another one of his grocery store locations."

The relationship between Belmont Sausage Co. and Zer-O-Loc has truly been a partnership.

"He shows us his proposal, and then we'll suggest to him what finish he should use, or we would help with his design, and then we work together to come to a mutual agreement on what should be done—and then we follow through," Hawkins says. "For Wally, being on time is very important. We will always service him as quickly as possible."

Zer-O-Loc places a premium on creating and maintaining successful professional relationships with its clients.

"We like working with existing customers,"

Hawkins says. "The reason our customers keep coming back to Zer-O-Loc is we have quality products, as well as excellent service and delivery."

### More on "the partnership"

Walter (Wally) Mulica began processing his own sausages from scratch for his own grocery store chain. His company Web site ([www.belmontsausage.com](http://www.belmontsausage.com)) relays that he decided to take traditional sausage recipes and manufacture them in the back of one of his grocery stores to supply his growing number of customers with quality products.

Mulica always chose the best cuts of meat and used the highest-quality seasonings. As the story goes, word of mouth traveled far and wide, and Mulica soon was unable to keep his shelves stocked as demand increased. In a period of six years, Mulica's business simply outgrew its original smaller, state-inspected facility. Thus, the new plant in Elk Grove Village, IL, was created—with Zer-O-Loc's help.

Belmont Sausage Co. specializes in traditional Eastern European sausages, offering the largest variety of Polish

meats and sausages. Smoked meat is the company's specialty, and the company can also customize any recipe for private label.

Meanwhile, Zer-O-Loc's range of products include:

- **Finished Zer-O-Loc EPS insulated panel system** – Ideally suited for cold storage facilities and low-temperature food processing plants. The R-value performance of its EPS insulated panel increases as temperature decreases. Designed to withstand the rigors of frequent cleaning and washing associated with food processing areas. Food processing panel design features include walk-on suspended ceiling systems and protective fiberglass reinforced panels (FRP) factory-applied to Zer-O-Loc wall and ceiling panels for increased scratch, dent, and washdown resistance.

- **EPS Insulated Panels and Sleeve joints** - The insulated panel system consists of an exclusive brand of Expanded Polystyrene insulation manufactured by Zer-O-Loc, and a high-gloss, pre-painted white steel finish that's unique in the panel industry. The system is designed to prove a low temperature building with maximum energy

efficiency through the creating of the thermal envelope. This panel system is also designed to withstand the required frequent washing and will not support the growth of bacteria. Zer-O-Loc panels are made with a tongue-in-groove Sleeve Joint Design. The Sleeve

Joint is a fully aligned precision-made panel connection system allowing 100-percent insulation to insulation contact, leaving no gaps for sludge and bacteria to collect.

- **Zer-O-Loc manufactures EPS panels** clad with a 25-gauge 304 stainless steel finish on one side or both sides of the panel. They are typically used in blast-freezer applications or in food processing areas that are subject to harsh cleaning conditions. Stainless steel panels are also recommended in food processing areas that are exposed to food products and ingredients with high salt or acidity content.

- **The company also makes hinged and manual sliding cooler and freezer doors.** This line of doors contain no wood in the door leafs or frame components, making them ideal for food processing facilities.

- **Fiberglass Reinforced Plastic (FRP) can be factory-bonded to the painted steel skins of Zer-O-Loc EPS insulated panels,** offering scratch and dent resistance. FRP also protects panels from the frequent rigorous cleaning required in maintaining a sanitary environment.

- **Services include drafting for approval, manufacturing, and installation.**

**E-mail [sales@zeroloc.com](mailto:sales@zeroloc.com) or visit [www.zeroloc.com](http://www.zeroloc.com)**

