

FIRE SYSTEMS INSTALLATION

VIDEO SMOKE DETECTION

AxonX focuses on energy

By Martha Entwistle, managing editor
RICHMOND, Va.—Mark Boone, manager of corporate risk engineering for Dominion Energy, a company with 17,000 employees and 30 power plants, first saw the axonX video smoke detection system three years ago during an NFPA code hearing.

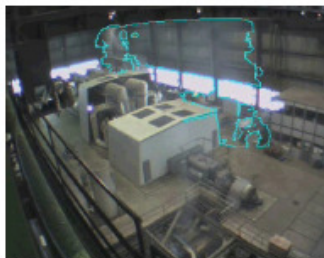
“It looked very interesting to me ... and I talked to Mac [Mottley, CEO of axonX] about demoing the equipment at one of our major power plants in Kincaid, Ill.,” he said.

In January, Boone said the “pilot part of the project is finished, the cameras are still in place and we have purchased additional cameras to install.” He would like to see the system

installed in other Dominion plants. Further, Boone’s spreading the word about axonX, having done presentations about the technology for a number of professional groups in the energy industry.

At Kincaid, AxonX put several cameras in the turbine area, a large, open volume space and in one major coal-handling area. It is “a site area of high interest,” Boone said, because the coal here is

Powder River Basin Coal. “It’s a type of coal that’s more volatile; it’s got the propensity to self-ignite.”



An axonX screen shot of smoke being detected on the turbine deck at Dominion Energy’s Kincaid Station

Boone said that he was less concerned with the system’s ability to detect smoke and flame than with its propensity to false alarm. “A system that false alarms is a lot less useful ... if a system is problematic that way, the operators will just shut it off.” The axonX system showed

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very good stability, he said.

One of the reasons for the increased interest among end users in the energy sector is that axonX got FM approval in early 2008 that certified its self-contained network camera as both a video smoke and video flame detector.

“The algorithms [that detect smoke and flame] is onboard the camera,” Mottley said. “We feel it’s a better solution than a server-based systems that’s hooked to a camera ... it’s easier to certify because it’s one detection device [the camera] versus a whole system that has to be certified, the camera, server, computer. It’s easier for [the end user] plus it’s less expensive on a per-channel basis.” **SSN**