

Stihl: Automated vertical storage of spare parts and accessories for outdoor power tools

Hänel systems offer maximum storage volume with a minimal footprint

Stihl dealer in the Midwest can expect fast, accurate service when they need equipment, accessories or spare parts

Mississippi Valley Saw was founded in 1978 by Bob Joynt in Peoria, IL. It began serving the nation's heartland by shipping chain saws, log splitters and accessories to about 70 independent dealers and lawn centers. Growth was swift, and in 1981 the company moved into a new location. Soon after, Mr. Hans Peter Stihl visited and asked them to drop all other lines and become an exclusive Stihl dealer. Mississippi Valley Stihl (MVS) was born.

MVS investigated all possible solutions to their time, inventory and space issues and chose the Lean-Lift® Vertical Lift Module from Hänel Storage Systems. A bank of three units were installed initially, with a fourth lift added shortly after to keep pace with demand.

The benefits of the Lean-Lifts® were immediate. Before the lifts, five or six people would work well into overtime to fill the day's orders.

After the lifts, a single person could get all orders received by 2 p.m. out by 4 p.m. the same day. Orders are picked faster with less walking and no more overtime.



The lifts work together to cue the next part automatically so that the operator can move from lift to lift, minimizing any potential wait time for trays to be delivered to the access point. Totes and boxes are used to collect the various parts for each order, with a put-to-light system ensuring the right parts go into the right container. A pick-to-light system is used to pull fast moving items from bins nearby.

The increased speed and accuracy afforded by the Hänel Lean-Lifts® allowed MVS to keep its commitment to its dealer network to provide the right part within 24–48 hours, even while stocking an ever-increasing inventory of parts.