

TURNING A HIDDEN RISK INTO A SIX-FIGURE SAVE

When a critical control valve starts to fail, it's not just a maintenance issue—it's a threat to production stability, product quality, and the operators relying on the process running smoothly. At one papermill, a 20" V150 valve assembly controlling Reel Pulper level was quietly signaling trouble. Repeated packing leaks persisted after repacks, creating uncertainty and growing risk for operators responsible for keeping the process stable.

EARLY WARNINGS, REAL CONSEQUENCES

Using **Emerson's ValveLink™ diagnostics**, the team uncovered a deeper issue: **low packing friction**, pointing to failing internal components bearings, shaft, and packing.

Left unresolved, the underlying issues would cascade:

- Inconsistent broke consistency
- Unstable stock feed
- Basis weight variation
- Dryer steam swings
- Sheet defects and costly line breaks

With each process line break carrying a **\$15,000 - \$40,000 hit**.

INSIGHT OVER INVENTORY SPEND

Rather than defaulting to a full parts purchase, the R.E. Mason team took a smarter path: They dug into the mill's history and found **spare parts purchased during the machine build were in storage**.

After verifying inventory, the team confirmed:

- Nearly all required components were already on-site
- Only a minimal number of parts needed to be sourced
- Labor could be precisely scoped for a planned outage

STABILITY RESTORED, WASTE ELIMINATED

By pairing proactive diagnostics with inventory awareness, the mill achieved:

- \$33,000 in avoided parts spend by utilizing existing inventory
- \$100K + potential losses prevented, with exposure that could have exceeded \$1M
- **Improved process stability**, reducing risk of variability, defects, and downtime
- **Inventory optimization gains**, clearing long-unused stock and avoiding future reorders

THE BIGGER WIN: SEEING BEYOND THE OBVIOUS

This was not only a repair it was a reminder that the best solutions often come from **combining data, experience, and a holistic view of the operation**.

Are hidden failures or unused assets impacting your operation more than you realize? Let's uncover them together?

