
Belanger® Equipment Cuts 'Tunnel Time' by 52% at Full-Service Washes



Renovated washes are faster – and more appealing

SAN MATEO, CA – As an established chain of full-service washes, the three Ducky's Car Wash locations in San Mateo county have developed an avid following since the first site opened in 1993. When the washes were purchased by an investment group several years ago, the group hired experienced car wash people like current Operations Officer Chuck Matthieu, to keep the company's growth on track.

"I saw right away that our wash equipment in San Mateo and San Carlos was outdated," Matthieu comments. "Both in terms of wear from many years of use, and because it could not keep up with our wash volumes without significant assistance." He explains "We were basically hand washing cars before we sent them through the tunnel – which is not the best use of 'sweat equity' in a full-service wash."

"You could say the existing equipment was very 'hands on,' because it required this labor-intensive prep work," Matthieu remarks. Based on nearly 50 years of experience in the business, Matthieu recommended the owners make a change – to Belanger tunnel equipment. "In my experience, Belanger equipment has always run smoothly and delivered reliable long-term washing performance," he says.

"It was a pleasure working with Chuck to equip these two sites," notes Bill Freeman of Belanger Distributor AquaTech Wash Systems. "We put together a package that makes the most of his 90-foot tunnels, including

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— Chuck Matthieu, Ducky's Car Wash

Quad Wave front-to-back mitters, Wave Across side-to-sides, Gyro Wraps, Low Side and Full Side Washers – plus a DuraTrans conveyor and AirCannon 50 dryer system for San Mateo."

"Our Belanger equipment delivers the cleaning performance and dependable operation we need," Matthieu observes. "Best of all, it's cut each car's on-conveyor 'tunnel time' by 52 percent – from 3 minutes to just 86 seconds." He says this time savings equals higher production capability – giving the sites room to grow as they continue to add volume and build customer frequency.

According to Matthieu, the equipment's better cleaning ability also means labor can be shifted from the prep area to the exit end. "Putting more labor at the exit helps get the cars out more smoothly, especially when volumes increase," he notes. "What's more, it increases customer interaction right where the clean cars are delivered – helping create the 'personal service' experience that full-service customers crave."

Regarding equipment selection, Matthieu has some well-considered words of advice for other operators and investors. "Equipping your wash is a big investment that should be treated as a big decision," he says. "Don't buy what's prevalent in your area, just because it's all you've seen. Get on a plane to see equipment if you need to – you might choose much more wisely than your competitor down the street."

Matthieu says this is an exciting time at Ducky's Car Wash. "With the ownership, management and equipment we have, we're writing a great next chapter," he remarks. "And there's more to come – our location in Menlo Park has a 177-foot tunnel that will be our next renovation project. I'll be excited to see what we create there with the help of AquaTech and Belanger."