Section IX - Controls

Summary:

- Pneumatic Controls
  - How reliable are these after 50 years?
  - Sometimes they’re very well maintained.
Narration:

Sometimes we see really terrible looking control panels. Sometimes these have pneumatic tubes that go to them. This would be an indication of a system that might have some problems. I will say, on the other hand though, sometimes they're very well maintained. And sometimes we will go to a building where people know how to control their pneumatic tubes, they know how to fix it. Whereas, when is the last time you were able to fix your brand new car that was having some sort of fuel injection problem? You can't. You have to plug your car into a computer, you have the dealership do a computer diagnostic on it. Same thing in buildings. But the tricky thing in buildings is that, with the computer systems in buildings, each one is unique. So you need to hire a $200 per hour programmer to come in and fix your building computer system. So the caveat is that tradespeople know how to do this, and it's not computer programming. It's making sure the tubes work well, and the air is not leaking out. You can hear the air leaking, and sometimes it's in a wall, and there are situations where pneumatic systems could be leaky and have problems. But the modern version of this can be incredibly complicated. So small libraries can't keep track of how to keep their computerized systems are working in our experience. Whereas small libraries that maybe just have some simple thermostats is a lot easier. So keeping it simple is a good thing.