

There Were Heroes Amidst the Gulf Oil Spill Fiasco



By SCOTT PROUTY, Dover's Pump Solutions Group (PSG™), Director of Industrial Sales, North America

When the traditional tally of the top news stories of the year is taken in a few months, there is one that is sure to be at the top of nearly every list: the explosion and fire on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico that put the Gulf, the area's marine industry and the coastlines of the Gulf states in peril for nearly four months as crude oil gushed from an uncapped well several miles under the water.

As a refresher, on April 20, 2010, an explosion and fire rocked and subsequently destroyed—while killing 11 workers—the Deepwater Horizon oil platform, which was resting 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana. Since this was an exploration rig and not a production rig, the flow of oil from its damaged piping was expected to be minimal. That turned out to be anything but the case.

When a complicated “static kill” procedure—which came on the heels of other failed attempts to stop the flow, or drill relief wells parallel to the damaged pipe—to cap the well was finally completed on Aug. 8, 110 days of uninterrupted oil flow had passed, with estimates placing the amount of oil that was introduced to the Gulf at nearly 5 million barrels. With a barrel of oil having a capacity of 42 gallons, that means that roughly 210,000,000 gallons of oil were spilled before the well was capped. This makes it the world's largest accidental release of oil into marine waters.

Needless to say, this oil wreaked havoc on the Gulf of Mexico, killing or injuring all forms of marine life, washing up on beaches and jeopardizing the livelihoods of innumerable fishermen, food processors, restaurant owners and any other Gulf-area residents who rely on the Gulf's bounty to make a living.

There Were Heroes Amidst the Gulf Oil Spill Fiasco

Published on Chem.Info (<http://www.chem.info>)

Of course, there were some heroes amidst the tragedy. The response of Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal was laudable, as he appeared to come up with creative ideas to stop the spill—or at least neutralize its effects—daily, ideas that often seemed at cross-purposes with the intentions of BP and the federal government. The fishermen who saw their catches affected by the spill were more than willing to power up their boats and aid in the laying of booms that helped capture 800,000 gallons of oil and slow the spread of the spill. And then there were the thousands of volunteers who flocked to the Gulf region, offering their time and efforts to keeping the beaches clean and saving the lives of as much wildlife as possible.

Also doing their part were the hundreds of companies who provided equipment to aid in the cleanup. These companies made quick, reasoned decisions to aid the effort and their nimble responses played a crucial role in ensuring that the spill's effects would not be as disastrous as they could have been. Of course, these companies were well-suited to the task at hand as they need to make important decisions like this all the time on a wide variety of topics if they hope to preserve and grow their operations.

One company that was ready when called upon was Wilden[®] Pump & Engineering, Grand Terrace, CA. The company's industry-leading air-operated double-diaphragm (AODD) pumps—specifically the Original[™] Series Metal PX8 line—were a common sight during the cleanup thanks to their robust, utilitarian design that makes them ideal for use in harsh operating environments.

"We had two very large orders for the Wilden 2-inch PX8 pumps and I knew exactly where they were headed—into the Gulf of Mexico for use in the cleanup efforts," said Richard Bergeron, President of Houma Valve Service, Inc., Houma, LA, which has been a Wilden distributor for nearly 40 years. "They used the Wilden pumps for the transfer of oil and wastewater, or to skim the oil off the water into a barge, or transfer from a barge to a tank truck. They could also be used for diesel-fuel transfer to help refuel the boats."

So while the year-in-review stories in December will focus on the spill, its size, the damage it caused and the response, save a thought for the efforts of those who helped limit the damage that ultimately could have been caused.

For more information on Wilden AODD pumps, go to www.wildenpump.com [1].

Source URL (retrieved on 02/01/2015 - 6:49pm):

http://www.chem.info/blogs/2010/10/there-were-heroes-amidst-gulf-oil-spill-fiasco?qt-most_popular=1

Links:

[1] <http://www.wildenpump.com/>