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PRESS RELEASE

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BLACKMER SLIDING VANE PUMP PLAYS PIVOTAL ROLE IN UNIQUE AMMONIA-TRANSFER APPLICATION

Grand Rapids, MI – The choices came down to two: either find a way to make it work, or shut an entire chemical plant down until repairs could be made to a damaged pipeline. This situation arose earlier this year in Houston, where international chemical and pharmaceutical giant Bayer operates a chemical plant. To maintain its 24/7 operating schedule, the plant relies on a continuous supply of ammonia that is shipped via a 14-mile-long pipeline from the Houston Ammonia Terminal. However, when the pipeline needed to be taken out of service for six weeks, Bayer needed to find an alternate solution or face the prospect of shutting the plant down.



Realizing that the second choice was untenable, personnel from Airgas Specialty Products, Duluth, GA, the supplier of ammonia-related services to the Bayer plant, and Gas Equipment Company, Inc., Dallas, TX, a preferred supplier of equipment to Airgas, put their heads together in search of a solution, which would have to be able to deliver the ammonia to the plant and transfer it into the facility at 100 gallons per minute at pressures between 200 and 230 pounds—24 hours a day for six weeks.

After contracting with common carrier Grammer Industries to deliver the ammonia, it was decided that a skid would need to be equipped with a booster pump that was powerful enough to meet the pressure and volume needs. Roy Nichols, Project Manager, NOx/SCR Ammonia Equipment for Gas Equipment Co., suggested using a Blackmer LGLD3E V-Belt sliding vane pump for the transfer applications.

“We were prepared for failures, and anytime you have an ammonia system running 24/7 you need reliable equipment, and if Bayer lost its ammonia, they’d have to shut the plant down,” explained Nichols. “Like they say, if you’re going to do the job right, you better get Blackmer the first time.”

After working through a couple of hiccups in the setup of the system, the final numbers showed that a total of 673 deliveries shipped 21,614,160 pounds of ammonia to the Bayer plant over six weeks of continuous operation and not a single drop of ammonia was spilled.

“The key from the pump standpoint is that for six straight weeks, 24 hours a day, we didn’t have a single problem,” said Blaine Davis, Engineering Manager for Airgas. “This was very unique, a one-time type of thing and I’m not sure anybody had done something on this scale before for that length. This was not a normal setup by any stretch of the imagination.”

For more information about Blackmer LGL Series Sliding Vane Pumps, please contact Tom Stone at (616) 248-9252 or stone@blackmer.com.

Blackmer is a global leader in the design and manufacture of high quality flow technologies, including peristaltic hose, eccentric disc and rotary vane positive displacement pumps, centrifugal pumps, screw compressors, air elimination systems and sliding vane and reciprocating compressors for the transfer of liquid and gas products. Blackmer pumps and compressors are used worldwide in a variety of industries including LPG, Chemical and Industrial Processing, Energy, Food & Sanitary, Military/Marine and Mobile Transport. Blackmer is part of Dover Corporation’s Pump Solutions Group.

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