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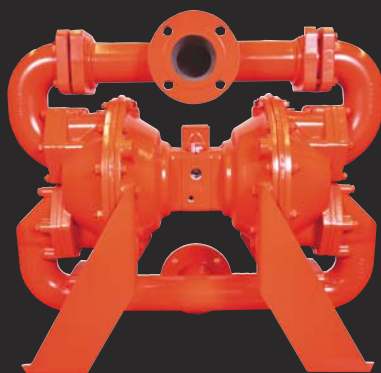
The Technology Resource for Processing Professionals™

Secrets to Eastman's Success

How did Eastman Chemical quadruple business in copolyester, prodding the company to open a new facility on its enormous Kingsport chemical campus?



Lathem's FR700 FaceIN™ System Recognizes Faces for Time & Attendance, & Access Control
> See pg. 05



Wilden® Full-Stroke Teflon® Diaphragms for Air-Operated Double-Diaphragm Pumps
> See pg. 16

Contents

Features

09 Processing Profile/Best Practices

A new facility was erected on the Eastman campus in order to support the growing market for its Tritan copolyester materials ...

18 Survey Says/Powder & Bulk Processing

Chem.Info's reader survey indicates that there are universal challenges for powder and bulk processors to overcome ...

20 Tech Trends/Tanks & Storage

SKS has continual success in inventory management due to a new automatic tank-gauging and -monitoring system from OPW Fuel Management ...

22 Product Spotlight/Safety Equipment

Addressing safety challenges at the dock and other fast-paced environments is easier said than done, but here are some tips from Rite-Hite on how to facilitate the process ...

26 Field Report/Automation

PBI/Gordon Corp. found a better way to conduct label inspection—by turning to Global Vision automated proofreading solutions ...

Departments

04 Cutting Edge

07 Editor's Letter/ Advertising Index

08 By the Book/Regulation

12 Product News

28 Equipment Q&A/ Combustible Dust Standards

34 Classified Ads

A-to-Z All-in-One Tank Monitoring

The SiteSentinel® iSite automatic tank-gauging system swells control for an above-ground storage tank inventory dedicated to bulk lubes.

By OPW Fuel Management Systems

To some people, SKS Inc. is one of the last of a vanishing breed. The company is a bulk lubes and fuels distributor, an operator of commercial fueling stations in the Pacific Pride network, and an installer and servicer of fuel equipment for end-users. Simply put, there are not too many firms that offer their clients a list of services that varied anymore.

“Basically, we’re a full-line jobber, including maintenance and equipment service, and there’s not too many of us left—a lot of people have chopped those maintenance and equipment services,” explains Newell Bowden, operations manager at SKS Inc. “We’ve maintained our technicians in the equipment department because we need the manpower for our own use as well.”

Ironically, while SKS is one of the last A-to-Z fuel, lube, equipment, maintenance and service providers left (at least in the southern California market), the company has had great success in inventory management for its lubes business by turning to a revolutionary tank-gauging and -monitoring system that offers everything from A to Z to its end-users. That system is the SiteSentinel® iSite™ automatic tank-gauging system from OPW Fuel Management Systems.

A key component in SKS Inc.’s operations is its bulk lube stor-

age facility, which features a mix of 32 horizontal and vertical above-ground storage tanks, some as tall as 15 feet, at a tank farm in the Miramar area of San Diego, about 25 miles due south of the company’s Escondido headquarters. SKS purchased this site a number of years ago, but it was only in late 2007 that it began experiencing some problems with the tank-gauging system at the facility.

“The tanks had commercial gauges, and our operation continued using those tape-or refinery-style gauges, but over the years, some of them failed or we just lost faith in their accuracy,” admits Bowden. “Beyond that, as lube products became more and more expensive, we started looking harder at more accurately monitoring and controlling our inventory. Any writeoffs of inventory losses we might have had were becoming more and more unacceptable, so inventory management and reconciliation was more and more critical.”

Regional manager for OPW Fuel Management Systems, Paul Nelson, introduced Bowden to the iSite automatic tank-gauging system. The iSite is built on Windows® technology, thereby providing the operational advantages that site operators need to ensure their sites are being managed as efficiently and effectively as possible. The iSite has been developed to offer:

- Highly accurate and precise tank-monitoring peripherals.
- Tracking of regulatory compliance reporting.
- An easy-to-read LCD touch screen with an icon-based menu structure.
- The latest in communications technology, allowing access to the system from anywhere in the world.
- Easy-to-manage user interfaces.
- Effortless reconciliation of inventories and deliveries.
- A variety of probe and sensor options.
- Simple, low-cost installation.

For SKS’ specific application, the iSite is able to handle a facility with 32 tanks, as well as offer 15-foot probes. In his search for a solution, Bowden had found that some other systems can manage locations with no more than 12 tanks equipped with 10-foot probes. The iSite is also more robust in its information gathering and configuration options than competitive systems.

“We had the iSite installed in early 2008 and it’s exceeded our expectations,” says Bowden. “Once we got it configured to the way we needed it to be, it’s been trouble-free ever since. The data management and configuration are super easy; maintenance is super easy; it’s super flexible in the amount and type of information you can push out of it; it’s highly customizable; and the alarm capabilities are far better than others.”



The OPW SiteSentinel® iSite™ console features an easy-to-read LCD touch-screen with an icon-based menu.


OPW's SiteSentinel® iSite™ ATG system was installed on 32 above-ground storage tanks at SKS's bulk lube storage facility.

Much like a Christmas gift that keeps on giving, Bowden continuously discovers new applications for the iSite that can improve business, as well as the safety of its employees and the environment.

"We're continuing to develop it as time goes on." Bowden continues, "The latest thing we're doing is to provide pump shutdown in case of an overflow or near overflow. Overfills in above-ground storage tanks are a very costly proposition, and we want to use it for overflow protection because it alerts us right away, when we may be approaching an overflow event."

With three bulk lube and fuel storage locations also in the SKS system, Bowden foresees a day when the iSite will be utilized at those sites, too: "Should we find a need at another location for automatic tank gauging, there wouldn't be any question that the iSite would be my choice. We're a direct-line dealer and service center for lube and fuel products, and we're also an end-user.



As an end-user, it's a very simple piece of equipment to operate and manage. It's very user-friendly, and because it's a Web application type of device, you can do it from anywhere." 

For more information, please visit www.opwglobal.com.

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