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CONTACT: Tom Stone, Director of Marketing
stone@blackmer.com or (616) 248-9252

Pirkl Gas Turns Valve Upgrade Requirement Into Opportunity, Improves Loading Times With Help of Blackmer® Pumps

Grand Rapids, MI, April 18, 2011 – With the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Section 58 safety regulation coming into effect July 1, 2011, Owatonna, MN-based Pirkl Gas, Inc., knew that an upgrade to its propane facility was going to be in order. The new regulation dramatically alters the types of equipment that can legally be used in propane-gas systems, requiring all bulk-storage tanks with a volume of more than 4,000 gallons of water capacity to have their storage tanks fitted with either internal valves or an Emergency Shutoff Valve. With this in mind, Pirkl Gas realized that if it was required to upgrade the valves on its tanks, why not just install new pumps and motors, or even add new tanks, as well?

With the NFPA regulation deadline looming, Pirkl turned to the experts at LPG & NH₃ Supply, Inc., Buffalo, MN, which has been supplying equipment and service for the propane and anhydrous ammonia markets since 1976, for the design and installation of the equipment that would help modernize the Pirkl Gas bulk plant.

Since the facility has a tendency to flood, the first order of business was raising the tanks off the ground and placing them on piers, before installing two new storage tanks. In order to increase the speed of the bobtail-loading process, three pumps were included in the system to raise the loading capacity. Together, the three pumps have the capability of pumping 525 gpm, and lowered Pirkl's overall loading times from 40 minutes down to a speedy 13 minutes on its 5,000-gallon trucks. This also means that Pirkl gas can now turn over its product three times faster than it had been able to in the past, increasing the amount of propane it can sell in a shorter period of time.

To ensure that the new loading areas would function at maximum efficiency, LPG & NH₃ Supply specified Blackmer® 3-inch LGL sliding vane pumps be installed. As a Blackmer distributor, LPG & NH₃ Supply like the standout features of the LGL Series pumps such as their cavitation suppression liners that reduce noise, vibration and wear; replaceable casing liners and end discs; ductile-iron construction with internal relief valves; self-priming and dry-run capabilities; and vanes that can be replaced without removing the pump from the piping system.

"The Blackmer pumps have been a tremendous improvement to our bulk plant. They are reliable, very quiet and, thanks to their efficiency, have improved our load times dramatically," says Pirkl. "They run so quiet, efficient and fast. They are the best pumps in the LPG market, by far."

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Greg Pirkl activates the shutoff valves at his recently upgraded bulk plant.

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The result is a modernized-bulk plant that is the epitome of fast, efficient, cost-effective operation. Three Blackmer LGL 3-inch pumps with 15-horsepower motors and enhanced RPMs were installed. An outside firm was used to add more openings on the tanks so there's now a high-speed loading bulkhead off the tail of two tanks with two 3-inch loading lines and one vapor line. On the other end of the tanks is a lower-speed bulkhead with one 3-inch loading line and one 3-inch Blackmer pump with a 15-horsepower motor. The pumps on both ends are geared to pump 175 gallons per minute, with the two pumps running in tandem at one end capable of producing 350 gpm of loading capacity combined at that end.

In addition to the LGL stationary pumps, PirkI Gas specifies TLGLF3 pumps on its rolling fleet because they provide the capacity that is needed and constant flow rates. They can also be used in tandem with Blackmer's 2-inch external Bypass Valve, which increases their reliability and dependability. PirkI's entire fleet has been built by Arrow Tank and Engineering, Co., Inc., Minneapolis, MN, a Blackmer OEM and distributor since 1957.

"We always look to partner with companies that have the same values and drive that we have," said PirkI. "The proof that our relationships with LPG, Arrow and Blackmer are paying dividends can be found in the success of our recent plant upgrades, as well as the reliability of our delivery fleet. These are relationships that we can also build on into the future."



Greg PirkI stands next to one of the Blackmer® 3-inch LGL sliding vane pumps installed during his bulk plant upgrade.

To illustrate just how effectively Blackmer pumps enhance the performance of PirkI Gas' operations, a video has been created that can be viewed on Blackmer's YouTube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/BlackmerGlobal>).

For more information on the Blackmer pumps, please go to www.blackmer.com. Blackmer is a member of Pump Solutions Group (PSG™). For more information on PSG and its member companies, visit www.pumpsg.com.

Blackmer® is the leading global provider of innovative and high-quality rotary vane pump, centrifugal and peristaltic (hose) pump, and reciprocating compressor technologies for the transfer of liquids and gasses. For more than a century, the Blackmer name has stood for unparalleled product performance, superior services and support, well-timed innovation and a commitment to total customer satisfaction. Supported by a worldwide network of distributors and original equipment manufacturers, Blackmer pumps and compressors are used in a multitude of applications in the Process, Energy and Military & Marine markets. Blackmer—headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA—is a member of Dover Corporation's Pump Solutions Group (PSG™).

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