RUST CONTROL

Maintaining spare parts using low-cost preservation solutions, such as non-toxic rust removers, will help prevent production hold-ups.

Pump failures at oil production facilities globally – be it the Canadian oilsands, Persian Gulf or the Mexican Gulf – are an occupational hazard, resulting in halted production and the loss of several thousand dollars of revenue and productivity for the business. It is mission critical to get the production to line up and running quickly.

While this scenario occurs frequently, many companies fail to anticipate it. Consequently, maintenance crews usually scramble to find spare parts, which, if on hand, are likely to have been in storage for a few years, and are now covered in rust. If the crew is lucky, the spare part works. If not, more time and money is lost in trying to refurbish the old part or find a new one.

Support services such as preservation of spares are often overlooked and considered to be low priority. Too often, critical spares are stored with no protection at all and the equipment degrades. But this scenario can be avoided with a little forethought and planning, minimizing downtime and ensuring operations are kept running at peak performance.

Preservation and corrosion control specialists, such as Cortec, work with asset owners in developing best-in-class, zero-defect, low-cost preservation solutions. Since many oil, gas and power generation operations have warehouses full of spares that may have already rusted, critical spare preservation often starts with restoration. Non-toxic rust removers such as VpCI-422 can effectively clean the rust off parts to restore them to usable condition on the same day. Bio-based cleaners such as EcoLine Cleaner Degreaser remove greases, oils and other contaminants to prepare the parts for preservation.

Once the critical spares are rust free, an extensive range of Vapour phase Corrosion Inhibitor (VpCI) rust preventives, foams, emitters, additives and films allow the cost-efficient preservation of equipment – whether on indoor racks or in open outdoor yards. Ease of removal renders this equipment operationally ready in a matter of minutes rather than days. Some Cortec VpCI water-based treatments have even been known to outperform oil-based protection. Spares may also benefit from temporary VpCI coatings that can easily be removed by alkaline spray or may be unnoticeable enough to leave on for installation.

Spares that are effectively preserved with Cortec VpCIs will be ready for rapid installation the next time a critical operating part fails. Instead of encroaching on production time while the plant operation is suspended and personnel scramble to deal with a rusty replacement part, workers can simply unwrap the VpCI-preserved critical spare and install it as quickly as a completely new part. This not only saves expensive downtime losses but also lowers labour and preservation costs through more efficient protective materials. In order to avoid massive operational losses and headaches like these, it is definitely worth sparing a thought for critical spares. ■

This article was submitted by Cortec Corporation, a global leader in innovative, environmentally responsible corrosion control technologies for packaging, metalworking, construction, electronics, water treatment, oil & gas and other industries. For more information, visit www.cortecvci.com.

When critical spare parts are left unchecked and unpreserved, the downtime required to restore it can be costly.

Corrosion control specialists are able to restore equipment using a range of rust inhibitors, foams, emitters, additives and films.

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