



Don't 'Run It Till It Drops'

Ignoring scheduled maintenance can have deadly consequences

> We've all heard the saying "Time is money." This expression is especially profound for a contract with a specific finish date and penalties to pay if the project isn't completed on time. With the completion date looming, we have one eye on the project and one eye on the clock. One wrong move is a recipe for disaster.

The rainiest summer in years had put the concrete slab pouring for the new industrial park way behind schedule. But things were looking up. The 10-day forecast was clear skies and

low humidity—perfect pouring days. The project manager gathered the workers to explain the situation, telling them that, until further notice, everyone would be working double shifts with no days off. Also, nothing should be done other than pouring concrete. When one worker asked about scheduled maintenance for the equipment, the reply was, "Run it till it drops, we'll deal with it later."

The project manager and his assistant were in their office reviewing their progress, when, after 13 straight

days of pouring slabs, they calculated the project as less than two days away from being back on track. After checking the five-day forecast and seeing no predicted change in the weather, they began "high fiving" each other. If the weather would hold out, not only would they be on schedule, they'd be ahead of schedule. The celebration was cut short, however, when one of the crew supervisors barged through the door yelling, "Boss, we got a problem! Dial 911 now!"



A crew had been in the midst of its normal routine. One man held the hose and poured the concrete while the other two smoothed and moved it about. They were almost done with this slab when suddenly the pump began grunting. One worker moving the concrete asked nervously, "Do you think we should shut the pump down?"

"Nah, it's just a small clog," replied the mover. "It'll take care of itself. Besides, we've got orders not to stop pouring!"

"I've heard it make a lot worse," added the guy holding the hose, "and nothing happened."

"Yeah, I know, but I can't remember the last time we did anything to that pump," replied the first mover.

Just then, the pump made a menacing growl. The metal fitting, worn paper

thin by the abrasive concrete, couldn't handle the load anymore. Like a cannon shot, the hose exploded away from the pump. With blinding speed, it flew past the man holding the end and struck the other two workers, sending them flying through the air, landing face down in the freshly poured concrete.

All things wear out over time, including industrial hose and couplings. In many cases, you can't see that [they] are worn out until it's too late.

By the time help arrived, it was too late for the men.

All things wear out over time, including industrial hose and couplings. In many cases, you can't see that the hose and/or couplings are worn out until it's too late. If a change-out

schedule is in place, adhere to it, even if there's pressure to just keep moving. If not, setting up a hose assembly change-out schedule, whether it's based upon time of service or amount of product conveyed, saves money in the long haul and promotes a safe workplace. All hose assemblies will come out

of service, one way or the other. You can do it when planned and it's convenient for you. Or you can wait and let it take itself out of service.

Waiting, or trying to stretch that dollar too thin, can have devastating consequences. ■

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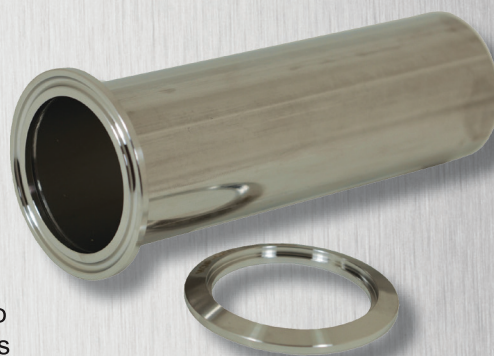
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