



IMPACT Another PSC Success Story

Coker Fractionation Tower — Refining Chemical

PSC Takes Refinery Tower Cleaning to New Level

Wisdom tells us there's more than one way to build a bridge. Likewise, there's usually more than one way to handle an industrial cleaning job. Which method you choose depends on the complexity of the challenge and the expertise of the service provider doing the work.

Take, for example, a large refinery just south of Los Angeles. This refinery processes over 150,000 barrels of crude oil per day, producing 1.8 billion gallons of gasoline per year. That's about 10 percent of the gasoline refined in all of California.

In early 2012, the refinery management noticed that its coker fractionation column, where effluent from the coker drums are fractionated into various hydrocarbon products such as distillate, naphtha and light gas, was operating at only 50 percent of capacity. They determined that the tower bottom was clogged with about 16 tons of coke carried over from the coke drums. Due to the reduced feed rates to the unit, the refinery was losing hundreds of thousands of dollars a day.

"This enabled the safe entry into the tower to effect the removal of the coke, which allowed the unit to be brought back on line, resulting in a 50% increase in production for the refinery."

Client Process Engineer

Refinery management turned to the experts at PSC, who had been serving the facility's industrial cleaning needs since the mid-1990s. After investigating the situation, PSC saw one of two ways to remove the coke: 1) Mechanically, which could possibly damage the tower's delicate internals and also expose workers to a variety of physical hazards, or 2) Chemically, which was a more sophisticated process that required a much higher degree of experience and expertise than mechanical cleaning.

On PSC's recommendation, refinery management authorized the chemical cleaning process which included the use of the proprietary Life Guard® surfactant

chemistry to safely remove the tar, asphalt, and LEL. Backed by some of the industry's most advanced chemical cleaning technology, the PSC team was able to clean the entire tower in just 18 hours.

When it comes to refinery cleaning, PSC has it down to a science.



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