

CHANGE IN PL

Surprises taken in stride at Kane Inc. on tank repaint

The successful maintenance repaint of a 5 million-gallon water tank in Anchorage, Alaska, last summer figured to be enough of a challenge without the following factors thrown into the mix:


1 The discovery during blasting of lead coating remnants in the ceiling perlin of the 35-year-old tank, thereby temporarily halting a project that had not been bid as a lead abatement job.

2 The use of coatings products that had not been used by the contractor previously.

3 The presence of a 200-plus lb. black bear that seemed to develop a keen interest in the project.

Nonetheless, completion of the 32-foot-high, 170-foot-diameter tank came off without a hitch, and in fact, wrapped up a full seven days ahead of schedule. That was good news for Sid Taylor, the project's lead engineer from the Anchorage Water & Wastewater Utility. For contractor Kane Inc. Industrial Coatings & Linings (Anchorage), ahead-of-schedule finishes and happy customers represent business as usual.

"Even with the lead abatement change, this project just went smoothly," says Jim Kane, the company's on-site project manager. "Everyone was happy with it."



Kane Inc. has developed a reputation for seamless on-site projects, but that could be justly credited to the preparation that they do offsite. For example, their successful use of coatings products they hadn't used before began with a decision to partner with Sherwin-Williams on the project.

The three-coat Sherwin-Williams exterior system called for surface prep to SSPC SP-10. Following were a prime coat of Fast Clad Zinc HS at 3.0 - 5.0 mils dft, an intermediate coat of MacroPoxy 646-NSF Fast Cure Epoxy and a topcoat of SherThane 2K at 3.0 - 5.0 mils dft. After surface prep to SSPC SP-10, the interior specification called for three coats of epoxy, and Kane selected MacroPoxy 646-NSF, each coat at 3.0 - 5.0 mils dft.

Fast Clad Zinc HS was recently introduced as part of the ExpressTech line of value-engineered coatings that offer quicker return-to-service times. While not a new

product, MacroPoxy 646 had been successful in other markets and recent NSF-approval made it a natural for potable water tanks. And SherThane 2K Urethane is a recently introduced heavy-duty enamel that provides a lasting gloss finish in high-visibility areas.

"Rick (Gilbreath, Sherwin-Williams Industrial Marine sales representative) brought us some samples and we sprayed some out and tested them," says Tim Kane, Jim's brother and the firm's operations manager. "We've always been happy with their products and these were no different. We love the way they applied."

"We like using Sherwin-Williams. Besides their products, they're the most service-oriented supplier in Anchorage, hands down."



A painter applies Fast Clad Zinc HS to cleaned and blasted steel on the surface of a 5-million-gallon water tank in Anchorage, Alaska. Above, AWWU engineer Sid Taylor and the finished tank brave a snow shower.

KANE



Taylor had written the spec for AWWU and was primarily concerned with the solids content of the interior coating and its NSF-approval status. At 72 percent solids by volume, MacroPoxy 646-NSF fell within necessary parameters.

SURFACE PREP

Starting on-site in the first week of June, 2004, Kane Inc. expedited surface preparation of the exterior by subcontracting the use of a BlasTrac unit, which kept other workers free to follow the unit spraying the primer. Surface preparation of the interior, however, led to a surprise discovery. After

cutting a hole into the tank's base large enough to drive equipment inside the tank, blasting of the ceiling revealed remnants of a lead coating that hadn't been completely removed during the last maintenance repaint in 1980. Work stopped immediately as Taylor and Tim Kane renegotiated the bid to include lead abatement. A day later, Kane workers were back in the tank, this time removing lead. All told, Jim Kane figures the lead removal added about seven days to the project.

But with two 10-hour shifts at work, the contractor still managed to complete the project, totalling more than 2,200



Contractor Kane Inc. leased the services of a BlasTrac unit to expedite surface preparation on the project.

gallons of coatings over 113,000 total square feet of surface, by July 23, seven working days ahead of schedule.

And that despite the bear's visits.

"I'd get there at 5 a.m. most days and open up the gate," says Jim Kane. "We thought we had seen a bear trail near the gate and one night my buddy thought he'd be cute and leave a dead salmon there."

Kane thought little of the gag until he noticed the salmon missing the following morning as he unlocked the gate.

"I turned to see my dog growling and his hair standing up. Then I saw the bear wandering toward the yard, so I grabbed the dog and ran. He chased us into the conex."

Kane, his dog and the bear were now all inside the fenced area surrounding the tank being painted and a neighboring 10-million gallon tank, but fortunately, the


bear soon left the way it came in. Kane says he encountered the bear three or four more times during the project, but subsequent sightings were brief.

NATURAL COLORS

Perhaps the bear may have been attracted by the natural colors specified by Taylor. Even though the tanks are largely shielded from public view, the green and platinum grey color scheme complement the pine trees that surround the site.

"I like to keep the colors kind of earthy," says Taylor. "Most of the tanks we have use those colors."

For Taylor, painting the tank allowed him to address a couple of other concerns. He was able to move the cathodic protection system from the columns of the tank — where they faced possible damage from the rising water levels and up-to-12-inch-thick surface ice layer — to the floor of the tank. He also was able to address a leak that had developed on the floor of the tank, and remove some no-longer-necessary steel, such as the painter's rail, from the tank interior, where it had served as a hosting area for corrosion.

"This tank was ready for some paint," he says. "And the fact that it happened so quickly and allowed us to address some other areas was good for the city. The more water storage we have, the better." 

CONTRACTOR SPOTLIGHT

Kane Inc. Industrial Coatings & Linings, Anchorage, Alaska

Much like retirees who summer in northern climates, Kane, Inc. personnel prefer to winter in tropical locales.

But for this steadily growing firm that has been generating close to \$3 million in annual revenues, the decision to pursue winter work in places such as Guam and Hawaii is all about business, and not about pleasure.

"We can only work six months out of the year here, so we needed to pursue these projects if we wanted to grow," says Tim Kane, Sr., who founded the firm, along with sons Tim, Jr., and Jim, in 1993.

A reputation for quality work and some strong relationships with area general contractors helped the Kane family hit the ground run-

ning when they started out. Those qualities endure to this day and were enhanced by the firm's SSPC QPI certification and NACE-certification for Tim, Jr. and Jim. But along the way the Kanes soon learned that winter work would not only bring added revenue, but would help attract high-quality employees.

"We learned quick that you need good hands in this business, and anybody who is worth anything is not going to sit around for six months of the year," says Tim Jr. "So we needed to pursue such work to keep good people here."

As a result, the Kanes see few geographical limits in their pursuit of winter work. Besides finishing several large structural steel projects in Guam and Hawaii, the firm



From left are Tim Kane Jr., Jim Kane and Tim Kane Sr. of Kane, Inc. Industrial Coatings & Linings.

is pursuing work in the Middle East and other North American locales.

"We treat our guys well, and I think it's important that we do," says Jim Kane. "They know how to get in, do the job and get out."

"Our name means a lot. That's how we grow. People say we do good work."