

Secure-Grip tools win industry recognition

Equalizer International

Equalizer International has been recognized once again for its innovative products after receiving two prestigious industry awards in Europe this year for its tools that are designed to introduce simplicity and control and enhance safety into the complex and hazardous world of flange maintenance.

Equalizer's Secure-Grip (SG) tools were recognized in the nuclear industry at the EDF Energy Nuclear Generation Challenge Awards in the United Kingdom as having an impact on safety and quality while challenging tasks' durations and costs.

The company was also awarded a Diploma of Distinction for Innovation at the 8th Gas Engineering Fair EXPO-GAS held in Kielce, Poland. The organizers of the event particularly singled out Equalizer's SG tools for pipe flange spreading, which they highlighted as one of the most innovative products on show during the two-day exhibition.

Major EDF Energy contractor Doosan Babcock used Equalizer SG tools to split tricky compressed asbestos (CAF) joints within a pipework bellows configuration.

Using SG tools eliminated the use of wooden wedges and hammers traditionally used in flange spreading but also aided in the mitigation of asbestos contamination.

Gus Carruthers, outage manager for Doosan Babcock, said, "The four key factors we consider are safety, quality, time and cost. If you have safety and quality, you can challenge the duration time, and then you find the costs take care of themselves. ***In the case of the CAF joint splitting project, we were able to reduce work time from days to a matter of hours.***"

Meeting EDF Energy's challenge to reduce power plant outage downtime without compromising safety or quality, Equalizer's product range consists of mechanical and hydraulic tools for splitting, aligning and closing flanges.

"All our tools are designed and developed to be safe, efficient and cost effective, and that's what both of these awards have recognized," said Equalizer Americas General Manager Hector Santos. "Our approach has always been to use innovation in our design and development to provide a solution for flange management

problems across a range of industries, and we're very pleased our success in achieving that has been endorsed by industry through these awards."

Equalizer innovation was also recognized last year when the company won the prestigious East of England Energy Group Award for Innovation at its annual conference in Norwich, England. The judges were impressed when Equalizer showed how its tools could significantly reduce downtime, thereby increasing productivity and reducing costs by using fewer people while improving safety, in particular reducing hand injuries.

EDF Energy is now keen for Doosan Babcock to roll out the use of Equalizer tools throughout its nuclear fleet. Also, Equalizer has substantially trained Doosan Babcock and EDF Energy fitters and technicians. Senior management from EDF Energy said they were particularly impressed with the equipment regarding hand safety and leak prevention.



Equalizer International's SG11TM Secure-Grip Mechanical Flange Spreader.



An Equalizer International employee utilizes the SG15TE Secure-Hydraulic Flange Spreader.

NEWS UPDATE

El Dorado Nitrogen LP: Equalizer™ tool versatile

HOUSTON — Equalizer Americas' patented flange alignment tool called the Equalizer™ can be used to align or realign flange joints during pipework construction, pipework commissioning or routine maintenance. The tool is attached to the flange joint where misalignment is at its greatest, and then the operator

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— Daniel Carr, El Dorado Nitrogen LP Unit

simply has to push and pull the flanges into correct alignment. The El Dorado Nitrogen LP Unit recently utilized the Equalizer, and the results speak for themselves.

"I tried using cam pens to align the flange with limited success," said Daniel Carr, maintenance manager, El Dorado Nitrogen LP Unit. "Equalizer Americas agreed to do an evaluation during a gauze change on a reactor with us. The company providing bolting ser-

vices for us used the Equalizer tool. Equalizer Americas provided training and assisted in the performance evaluation.

"On one occasion prior to using the alignment tool, this flange was severely misaligned. Due to the configuration of the pipe and other obstacles, it had taken over eight hours of pull and tug to bring the flanges in alignment. ***When the Equalizer tool was demonstrated, it took less than 20 minutes! No other alignment tool looks to have the capability and versatility of the Equalizer.***"

Not only does Equalizer Americas offer a range of patented flange alignment tools that are often unmatched in versatility, but it also exemplifies a strong commitment to safety.

"The company's safety performance on the project was excellent," stated Carr. "There were no safety problems. Equalizer Americas worked with us and went on-site during our shutdown. I plan on using the company again. I will be making additional purchases from them."

For more information, visit www.EqualizerAmericas.com or call (713) 927-1840. ●