

All American pressure washers save the day on the Delaware River

On Friday, November 26, 2004 at approximately 9:15 pm the 750-foot single-hull tanker “Athos 1” was reported leaking oil into the Delaware River in route to its terminal at the Citgo asphalt refinery in Paulsboro, New Jersey. As two tugboats were helping the vessel maneuver to its terminal – a routine procedure – one of the tugboat operators noticed oil in the water, and the oil tanker listed eight degrees and lost power. Two punctures were discovered in the tanker’s hull – 1-foot by 2-foot and 1-foot by 6-foot in size. Approximately 265,000 gallons of Venezuelan crude oil spilled into the river.



The spill affected approximately 115 miles of shoreline along the tidal portion Delaware River. In response to the threat, the U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA, state response agencies and responsible parties worked to organized a massive cleanup with the help of Environmental Cleaning Companies from all over the United States. One of the biggest challenges was cleaning off the oil that collected on the dock pilings and decontaminating the bottom of private boats in the timeliest manner.

The most effective way to deal with the cleanup was using high-pressure hot water washers. The Environmental Cleaning Companies were scrambling to locate as many pressure washers as possible in the shortest amount of time. After contacting every rental and pressure washer dealer within 500 mile radius, Browns Equipment came to the rescue.

“The Environmental Cleaning operators are not known for handling equipment with a light touch. They’re tough on the equipment and will ultimately destroy it with use. This is why we needed a built tough, made to last All American pressure washer,” explains Todd Brown, co-owner of Browns Equipment, the Alkota Distributor in Philadelphia, PA.



“We needed a pressure washer that would run 8 to 10 hours a day – seven days a week and we needed them in 4 to 5 days.”

Enter the All American portable, direct driven, gas-powered, hot water pressure washer. Using the model DH4030HGOF – with 3000 PSI pressure at 4 GPM was the best way to blast away oil from the dock pilings and other contaminated areas.

After proving how reliable the All American pressure washers were against the competition, over 100 All American pressure washers were delivered to the many different response sites along the approximately 57 miles of Delaware River Shoreline.



In addition to being an ecological emergency, the oil spill also brought about an economic opportunity for the environmental firms involved. The firm that had the most machines running was given more jobs to do and hence more power in the clean up operation. One firm in particular, Environmental Restoration (ER) out of Colorado, chose the All American line early as its pressure washer of choice. This firm consistently had the most machines up and running daily and soon became the largest company at the site. As the operation grew, Browns and Alkota were able to provide the All American machines necessary in a timely manner to keep ER ahead of their competition and the clean up operation on schedule.

“Many thanks to Alkota Cleaning Systems for their fast response time in getting this equipment out. This was definitely an experience I will not forget.” Stated Todd.

The Delaware River and Bay is home to the fifth largest port complex in the United States in total waterborne commerce. Every year, over 70 million tons of cargo move through the tri-state port complex, which includes the major ports of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Camden, Gloucester City, and Salem, New Jersey; and Wilmington, Delaware. It is the second largest oil port in the United States, handling about 85% of the East Coast’s oil imports.

All American Cleaning Systems is a division of Alkota Cleaning Systems Inc., based in Alcester, South Dakota. For more information on the All American equipment mentioned in this article, please contact Jeff Burros at 1-800-255-6823 or email jkburros@alkota.com.