

Case Study

Gas Plant

For our purposes “Gas Plant” is a generic term for Natural Gas Processing Facilities. We use the term to describe wellhead processing, centralized processing plants, straddle extraction plants, sweetener plants, and sulfur production plants. And, for the purposes of asbestos abatement, there is not much difference between a typical gas plant and a lean oil plant or a fractionation unit.

Background

Oil and Gas history is closely tied to the asbestos industry – right about the time of the Lucas Gusher at Spindletop the Asbestos mining and manufacturing industry was ramping up. As oil and gas processing became more sophisticated, so did the requirement for better insulations. Accordingly, gas plants built from the 1910s through the 1970s are loaded with asbestos thermal system insulations (TSIs). Whether the process required keeping the product hot or cold, asbestos was the preferred insulator.

Today, owners of oil and gas production facilities built during the early boom years are facing difficult decisions. Newer plants are more efficient and many facilities are sitting dormant and with each passing year become more and more dilapidated. Plants that employed large work forces and were central to many rural economies in the 1950’s are now fenced-off public nuisances.



Getting it Right

When a facility owner decides to divest of a non-producing facility they turn to dismantling companies. Demolishing a gas plant is not the same as demolishing an office building – the equipment is different, the health and safety risks are different, and the complexity of the environmental impact are different. For that reason, most facility owners have a stringent vetting process and hand-pick a small group of dismantling contractors to perform their work.

In like manner, the dismantling contractors must be selective when they subcontract the asbestos abatement work; their clients depend on their due diligence. Removing asbestos from a gas plant before demolition involves risk: working from heights (columns can exceed 170' tall), in all types of severe outdoor conditions (high winds, extreme temperatures, rain, and snow), and often with challenging schedules. Additionally, regulations vary from State to State, so a preferred abatement contractor will need to be adept at knowing the regulations no matter where the facility is located.

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How can we help?

If you need help on a project, just let us know what you need!

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Why PTI

PTI's experienced personnel have been removing asbestos from gas plants across the United States since the mid-1980's. We have worked in active plants abating select equipment and in plants where the entire facility is scheduled for removal. Dismantling contractors choose PTI because we work safe and compliant, our pricing is competitive, we meet our schedule commitments, and we comply with the requirements of the facility owner vetting process.



Project Snapshots

Multiple Sites in West Texas

In 2015, PTI inspected and abated three separate gas plant facilities in West Texas prior to demolition. We worked as a subcontractor to the demolition company, which had an aggressive schedule to complete the work due to regulations placed on the owner. PTI and the dismantling contractor worked side-by-side on the first facility, coordinating their work to allow for abatement of friable material while other demolition activities were going on nearby.

After the first gas plant was fully abated of all friable pipe insulation and non-friable foam glass mastic, PTI moved to the second facility and was able to stay in front of the dismantling contractor. Due to the work ethic and professionalism of PTI's crew, the dismantling contractor and owner were comfortable allowing PTI to move from site-to-site unaided. PTI was visited by Texas Department of State Health Services for spot inspections on two occasions, and received accolades from the inspector for a clean job site and for proper calibration of air pumps (both uncommon according to the inspector).

Large Gas Plant in South Louisiana

In 2012, PTI spent 9 months in South Louisiana abating one cryogenic unit and 2 fractionator units in a large gas plant. In this case, the plant was not being demolished, but disassembled and moved to a new location, so every piece had to be abated, documented, removed, and labeled for reuse. PTI participated in creating daily JSAs that involved extensive coordination between the dismantling contractor, an engineering firm at the site, and the abatement work.

At this project, PTI removed over 50,000 sf and 50,000 lf of asbestos insulation. The crew size fluctuated from 12 to 21 workers based on the needs of the project. PTI's crew was rewarded by the owner and the dismantling contractor for working safely. One of the several highlights from this project includes the 4-shower unit temporary facility PTI's crew built, which led to a lot of house framing requests from various site visitors, including the Louisiana DEQ Inspector.

