Energy Tips – Pumping Systems

Pumping Systems Tip Sheet #6 • October 2005

Industrial Technologies Program

Match Pumps to System Requirements

An industrial facility can reduce the energy costs associated with its pumping systems, and save both energy and money, in many ways. They include reducing the pumping system flow rate, lowering the operating pressure, operating the system for a shorter period of time each day, and, perhaps most important, improving the system's overall efficiency.

Often, a pumping system runs inefficiently because its requirements differ from the original design conditions. The original design might have been too conservative, or oversized pumps might have been installed to accommodate future increases in plant capacity. The result is an imbalance that causes the system to be inefficient and thus more expensive to operate.

Correct Imbalanced Pumping Systems

If the imbalance between the system's requirements and the actual (measured) discharge head and flow rate exceeds 20%, conduct a detailed review of your plant's pumping system. Calculate the imbalance as follows:

$$\text{Imbalance (\%)} = [(Q_{meas} \times H_{meas})/(Q_{req} \times H_{req}) - 1] \times 100\% ,$$

where

Q_{meas} = measured flow rate, in gallons per minute (gpm)
H_{meas} = measured discharge head, in feet
Q_{req} = required flow rate, in gpm
H_{req} = required discharge head, in feet.

A pump may be incorrectly sized for current needs if it operates under throttled conditions, has a high bypass flow rate, or has a flow rate that varies more than 30% from its best efficiency point (BEP) flow rate. Such pumps can be prioritized for further analysis, according to the degree of imbalance or mismatch between actual and required conditions.

Energy-efficient solutions include using multiple pumps, adding smaller auxiliary (pony) pumps, trimming impellers, or adding a variable-speed drive. In some cases, it may be practical to replace an electric motor with a slower, synchronous-speed motor—e.g., using a motor that runs at 1,200 revolutions per minute (rpm) rather than one that runs at 1,800 rpm.

Conduct quick reviews like this periodically. Especially for multipump systems, this can be a convenient way to identify opportunities to optimize a system at little or no cost.

Example

This example shows the energy savings that can be obtained by not using an oversized pump. Assume that a process requires 1,500 tons of refrigeration during the three summer months, but only 425 tons for the remaining nine months. The process uses two chilled water pumps operating at 3,500 gpm and requiring 200 brake horsepower (bhp) each. Both are used in summer, but two-thirds of the flow rate is bypassed during the remaining months.

Suggested Actions

- Survey your facility's pumps.
- Identify flow rates that vary 30% or more from the BEP and systems imbalances greater than 20%.
- Identify misapplied, oversized, or throttled pumps and those with bypass lines.
- Assess opportunities to improve system efficiency.
- Consult with suppliers on the cost of trimming or replacing impellers and replacing pumps.
- Determine the cost-effectiveness of each improvement.

Resources

DOE and Hydraulic Institute, *Improving Pumping System Performance: A Sourcebook for Industry.*

Hydraulic Institute—HI is a non-profit industry association for pump and pump system manufacturers; it provides product standards and a forum for the exchange of industry information for management decision-making. In addition to the ANSI/HI pump standards, HI has a variety of energy-related resources for pump users and specifiers, including training, guidebooks, and more. For more information, visit www.pumps.org, www.pumplearning.org, and www.pumpsystemsmatter.org.

U.S. Department of Energy—DOE's Pumping System Assessment Tool (PSAT) can help you assess pumping system efficiency and estimate energy and cost savings. PSAT uses pump performance data from Hydraulic Institute standards and motor performance data from the MotorMaster+ database.

Visit the BestPractices Web site at www.eere.energy.gov/bestpractices for more information on PSAT and for upcoming training in improving pumping system performance and in becoming a qualified pumping system specialist.

One 3,500-gpm pump is therefore replaced with a new 1,250-gpm pump designed to have the same discharge head as the original unit. Although the new pump requires only 50 bhp, it meets the plant's chilled water requirements most of the year (in all but the summer months). The older pump now operates only in the summer.

Assuming continuous operation with an efficiency (η_m) of 93% for both motors, we can calculate the energy savings from operating the smaller pump as follows:

$$\text{Savings} = (200\text{ hp} - 50\text{ hp})/\eta_m \times 0.746\text{ kW/hp} \times (9\text{ months}/12\text{ months}) \times 8{,}760\text{ hours/year}$$

$$= 790{,}520\text{ kWh/year}$$

At an average energy cost of 5 cents per kWh, annual savings would be about $39,525.

References

Variable Speed Pumping: A Guide to Successful Applications, Hydraulic Institute and Europump (www.pumps.org), 2004.

Conduct an In-Plant Pump Survey, DOE Pumping Systems Tip Sheet, 2005.

Trim or Replace Impellers on Oversized Pumps, DOE Pumping Systems Tip Sheet, 2005.

Optimize Parallel Pumping Systems, DOE Pumping Systems Tip Sheet, 2005.

Adjustable Speed Pumping Applications, DOE Pumping Systems Tip Sheet, 2005.

About DOE's Industrial Technologies Program

The Industrial Technologies Program, through partnerships with industry, government, and non-governmental organizations, develops and delivers advanced energy efficiency, renewable energy, and pollution prevention technologies for industrial applications. The Industrial Technologies Program is part of the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

The Industrial Technologies Program encourages industry-wide efforts to boost resource productivity through a strategy called Industries of the Future (IOF). IOF focuses on the following eight energy and resource intensive industries:

- Aluminum
- Forest Products
- Metal Casting
- Petroleum
- Chemicals
- Glass
- Mining
- Steel

The Industrial Technologies Program and its BestPractices activities offer a wide variety of resources to industrial partners that cover motor, steam, compressed air, and process heating systems. For example, BestPractices software can help you decide whether to replace or rewind motors (MotorMaster+), assess the efficiency of pumping systems (PSAT), compressed air systems (AirMaster+), steam systems (Steam Scoping Tool), or determine optimal insulation thickness for pipes and pressure vessels (3E Plus). Training is available to help you or your staff learn how to use these software programs and learn more about industrial systems. Workshops are held around the country on topics such as "Capturing the Value of Steam Efficiency," "Fundamentals and Advanced Management of Compressed Air Systems," and "Motor System Management." Available technical publications range from case studies and tip sheets to sourcebooks and market assessments. The Energy Matters newsletter, for example, provides timely articles and information on comprehensive energy systems for industry. You can access these resources and more by visiting the BestPractices Web site at **www.eere.energy.gov/ industry/bestpractices** or by contacting the EERE Information Center at **877-337-3463** or via email at **www.eere.energy.gov/informationcenter/.**

BestPractices is part of the Industrial Technologies Program Industries of the Future strategy, which helps the country's most energy-intensive industries improve their competitiveness. BestPractices brings together emerging technologies and best energy-management practices to help companies begin improving energy efficiency, environmental performance, and productivity right now.

BestPractices emphasizes plant systems, where significant efficiency improvements and savings can be achieved. Industry gains easy access to near-term and long-term solutions for improving the performance of motor, steam, compressed air, and process heating systems. In addition, the Industrial Assessment Centers provide comprehensive industrial energy evaluations to small- and medium-size manufacturers.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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