

White Paper : City of Cashmere

Wastewater operators for the city of Cashmere had a messy and dangerous problem. The lift station serving a subdivision of the Washington town was routinely clogging up with stringy materials and elastics. The pair of pumps could not handle the ragging and the city was forced to install a trash basket a 55-gallon drum cut in half and hung in the waste stream to keep the solids out of the pumps.



Operators had to regularly clear the trash basket, a dangerous and disgusting job. "The process of cleaning the basket was one of the most disgusting jobs you could run across," says Andrew Klempel, account manager for Whitney Equipment Company. The city was also concerned with worker safety accessing the basket in the vault was awkward due to configuration, and there was risk from removing potentially dangerous material, such as needles, from the basket.



The operators would have to pull clogged pumps occasionally, which added to the problem by leaving the lift station open to a failure. The city of Cashmere, in the geographical center of Washington state, is located at the foot of the Cascade Mountains and the Museum Lift Station is sited adjacent to the Wenatchee River. Overflow would result in the threat of a river contamination.



After the last pump failure, Steve Croci, the city's director of operations, began looking at options. There had to be a better way. "We didn't want to replace our old pumps with like pumps, so we decided to do more than an upgrade," Croci explains. "We wanted to take them a step above so we got the Concertors and reduced maintenance."



The city found its solution with the Flygt Concertor™ N integrated intelligence pumps. The Concertor series, with a control system inside the pump, feature auto cleaning, a power-saving premium motor, and the ability to upgrade to control programs that clean the entire wet well. The pumps fit on the Cashmere lift station's two-inch rail system, and integrate with the existing control cabinet.

“We pulled out the existing pumps and slid the new pumps down the rails,” Klempel explains. “Using longer cable that could reach all the way back to the existing control cabinet, we were able to eliminate the older wire nuts in the junction box.”

With the built-in intelligence, the pumps allows for a significantly smaller footprint in the control cabinet, and can be used for lift stations that don't have room for variable frequency drives. The Concertor plugs in like a standard pump, but the VFD is internal to the motor, with high power pump monitoring features that detect when it is pumping outside its normal range.

Critical for Cashmere is the clog detection function, which detects when the pump is about to clog and triggers the pump cleaning cycle. The built-in intelligence will then operate the impellor at different speeds and directions to remove the debris. Also important to the city is “It's a nice bonus having the company back up its pumps,” Croci says.

The Cashmere lift station may still be collecting rags, but operators barely notice. “The basket's still in there,” Croci says, “but since the new pumps were installed in April of 2021, we haven't had to go in.”



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