

Turning A Harbor Into A Haven

BOSTON YACHT HAVEN MEETS THE VESSEL-FUELING NEEDS OF ITS HIGH-END CLIENT BASE WITH THE RELIABLE ASSISTANCE OF BLACKMER® GX AND X SERIES SLIDING VANE TRANSFER PUMPS

By Kent Crawford



Based in Boston Harbor, Harbor Fuels uses a fleet of barges equipped with Blackmer® GX & X Series Sliding Vane Pumps (GX inset) to meet the fuel-supply needs of Boston Yacht Haven's high-end clientele.

Blackmer® GX Series Sliding Vane Pump

One of the great things about language is that two words can have essentially the same meaning, but when you read or hear them they create very different images in the mind. For instance, two nautical terms have a common definition: "a place (or inlet) providing shelter for ships, boats or other vessels." But when you say the word "harbor," the image that comes to mind is an area near the coast teeming with all type of watercraft activity, from sailboats and yachts to barges and ocean-going oil tankers. Say the word "haven," on the other hand, and a completely different image is created, one that is more idyllic or tranquil, a place of refuge.

The Boston Yacht Haven may actually be located in Boston Harbor in Massachusetts, but its name has been chosen well and is an indicator of the facility's true intentions, which are spelled out on its website: "This is a place where luxury floats in the air. Where mega-yachts sit majestically in an exclusive 100-slip marina. Where

newly renovated deluxe guest suites indulge in every way. And where the surroundings are a unique blend of beauty and history and a shimmering urban landscape. This is Boston Yacht Haven."

The facility's reputation is such that in May 2013 *Yankee Magazine* gave it its 2013 Editors' Choice Award for "Best Lodging in Greater Boston" (and when was the last time something named "Yankee" had something nice to say about Boston?), saying, "this luxury lodging offers harbor views, spacious suites decorated in nautical style and a host of shared amenities...."

"This is a first-class facility with first-class amenities that caters to a first-class clientele," said Kevin Lussier, General Manager of the Boston Yacht Haven. "As such, we know we have to provide first-class service in every instance."



Harbor Fuel 1 Captain Jackie Gilman – fondly known as the “fuel-barge lady” – pulls hose in preparation for a fueling operation. Blackmer GX & X Series pumps (foreground) help optimize the fuel transfer.

Always On Call

One of the most important services that Boston Yacht Haven provides to its clients is at-the-dock fueling. To do this, Boston Yacht Haven contracts with Harbor Fuels, a company that specializes in delivering marine diesel for high-speed, in-slip fueling for a wide array of vessel types and gallonage requirements. The fueling services are performed by a fleet of barges that carry the fuel to where it is needed then transload it into the vessel’s fuel tanks.

“A typical day with Harbor Fuels starts at about 5:30 in the morning,” explained Jackie Gilman, Captain of the Harbor Fuel 1 fueling barge, which was put into service in June 2012. “We’re a mobile unit so we can go in and out of any destination we need. We fuel all ferries, commercial boats, private yachts, anywhere from 100 gallons a day to 100,000 gallons a week. A typical fueling process depends on the gallon amount, anywhere from 100 to 500 gallons we can do in five to 10 minutes tops. A maximum amount off the barge would be 10,000 gallons and it would take an hour-and-a-half at the agreed-upon gallon-per-minute rate.”

As with any fueling operation, strict regulations and safety measures must be followed in order to ensure that all barge personnel, clients and the environment are protected from harm during the fueling process.

“When we’re fueling a yacht we can come right alongside, make sure we are 100% secure and prepare for the fueling operation, whatever the gallon amount is,” continued Gilman, who calls herself the “fuel-barge lady.” “We do the paperwork, make sure we have good communication and activate the pump with an

electronic key card. Our computer is very smart in that it remembers every customer, the name, size of the boat, the gallons, everything.”

Finding The Perfect Pump

While the goal of Harbor Fuels is safe, efficient, reliable delivery of fuel where and when it is needed, that would not be possible if the delivery barges did not incorporate the best pumping equipment. In the search for the ideal pumps for its fueling applications, Harbor Fuels turned to Hall Trask Equipment Company, Braintree, MA, USA, a longtime supplier of pumping technology from Blackmer®, Grand Rapids, MI, USA, which is a founding member of the Dover Corporation’s Pump Solutions Group (PSG®), Oakbrook Terrace, IL, USA. Hall Trask Equipment is a third-generation supplier of pumps, valves, meters and tank equipment for use in industrial fluid-transfer and –transport applications in New England.

“We’ve been a supplier of Blackmer pumps for more than 40 years, and we’ve sold a number of thousands of Blackmer pumps and been very happy with the applications they fill for us,” said Mike Trask of Hall Trask Equipment, who, along with his brothers, Paul and Billy, are following in the footsteps of their grandfather and father in the family business. “We’ve supplied Blackmer sliding vane pumps for this Harbor Fuels barge that was commissioned last year for high-flow-rate filling of vessels throughout the harbor. This application needed to have very low maintenance and high output and we chose the Blackmer pump to meet the needs of the barge.”

Specifically, Harbor Fuel 1 is outfitted with a 2-1/2-inch GX Series pump that can deliver high-capacity flow rates up to 121 gpm (461 L/min) and a 2-inch X Series model that delivers 70 gpm (264 L/min) at lower speeds.



Harbor Fuel 1 is outfitted with Blackmer GX & X Series pumps, a 2-1/2-inch model for high-capacity fuel transfer, and a 2-inch version for operations that require lower flow rates.



Harbor Fuel 1 Captain Jackie Gilman, center, and Boston Yacht Haven General Manager Kevin Lussier, right, have seen their fueling operations optimized with the use of Blackmer® Sliding Vane Pumps, which were recommended by Mike Trask, left, Officer, Hall Trask Equipment Co., a longtime Blackmer distributor.

Each pump also features a variable-speed control so that the speeds can be closely monitored, which increases the safety of the fuel-transfer process no matter the flow rate.

“The high-speed pump we generally hook up to a larger vessel when we’re fueling a larger volume, so anything over 500 to 1,000 gallons and up we’re going to use the high-capacity versus low-capacity pump, which is best for deliveries of around 400 gallons at a rate of about 60 gpm,” said Gilman.

The Blackmer GX & X Series pumps are able to reliably meet the fueling demands of Harbor Fuels because they feature Blackmer’s unique sliding vane method of operation that enables the vanes to self-adjust for wear while maintaining desired flow rates and also providing excellent self-priming and dry-run capabilities. The mechanical seal and ball-bearing construction provide maximum reliability while the symmetrical bearing support assures even loading and wear. Maintenance is also quick and easy as any worn vanes can be replaced without needing to remove the pump from the vessel.

“When we’re out fueling, No. 1 is safety and No. 2 is performance,” said Gilman. “I feel safe when I’m out there, the Blackmer pumps are trustworthy, and the performance has been 100%. Every single delivery has been outstanding, the numbers are right on, the pressure is right on, the gauges are right on. The quietness it delivers—it is a nice, soothing, perfect delivery process.

Usually the higher flow rate, like 125 to 130 gpm, the pump’s going to be louder, but the faster the volume coming through the Blackmer pump, down the pipe, through the hose into the boat, it really quiets down.”

“In the end, we recommended Blackmer pumps for this application because of their high efficiencies and performance throughout the lifetime of the pump,” added Trask. “In fuel-transfer applications, whether on a barge or a truck, Blackmer pumps always stand out due to their high efficiencies and longevity.”



Harbor Fuels has built its reputation on providing safe, reliable fuel-transfer operations for vessels that traverse Boston Harbor. The use of Blackmer pumps has only helped to enhance that reputation.



After a year of operation on Harbor Fuel 1, Captain Jackie Gilman was completely sold on the safety and performance of Blackmer pumps: "They're wicked awesome," she exclaimed.

of any aspect of our operation. That's where the Blackmer pumps really shine. We place a lot of strict performance demands on them and they have responded beautifully every time we have asked them to."

That level of reliable performance also means that after more than a year of captaining Harbor Fuel 1 and working with the Blackmer pumps, Gilman "harbors" no fears that the Boston Yacht Haven fueling process will continue to be nothing other than an idyllic operation.

"When we're out there on the water doing our job we have the Blackmer pumps on board and they help us deliver the fuel safely and efficiently," she said. "These Blackmer pumps have been wicked reliable and have proven themselves time and again to be efficient. They deliver 100% every time. I trust them...they're wicked awesome."

Conclusion

In order for the Boston Yacht Haven to deliver the ultimate service experience for its clients, a lot of disparate parts need to work in perfect harmony.

"Our clients rightfully expect a best-in-class experience every time and that's what we strive to provide them everyday," said Lussier. "That means that we can't compromise on the quality, performance and reliability

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