

Eddy's Boilerhouse News

TIP OF THE MONTH FOR THE MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

By Eddy Emerson

Improve Boiler Efficiency

Cost of Boiler Scale \$\$\$

Cost of boiler scale, sounds like someone is going to come out to the boiler plant and weigh or measure the scale and send you a bill for it. Well that is exactly what is happening. Your fuel supplier, whether gas, oil or coal is collecting on your scale in the boiler every month. He has been on a cruise to Alaska, first class, with his family on your boiler scale.

The point is this; scale is not cheap when it is in side a boiler. The following information comes from Odeco Nalco Company one of the leaders in water treatment. This is the annual cost of scale in your boiler.

Steam Generation lbs/hr - hp	1/64" (2%) Thick Scale	1/32" (4%) Thick Scale	1/16" (6%) Thick Scale
5000 – 150 Horsepower	\$11,200	\$22,400	\$33,600
10,000 – 300 Horsepower	\$22,400	\$44,800	\$67,200
20,000 – 600 Horsepower	\$44,800	\$89,600	\$134,400
50,000 – 1500 Horsepower	\$112,000	\$224,000	\$336,000

These numbers above are based on Natural Gas Cost of \$0.85 per therm and the steam production (boiler output) being 24 hours a day and 365 days a year.

There is another cost to scale and that is the cost of boiler repairs or cleaning once the boiler has been allowed to scale heavily. Water treatment is the best thing that has ever happened to boilers and the worse than that has ever happened to the boiler business. For years users did not pay much attention to scale build-up and the boiler repair companies had plenty of work getting rid of that scale. This is a “pay me now or pay me later” situation. The “pay me now” is providing good water treatment. The “pay me later” is repairing the boiler after scale has built up.

The “pay me now” is much cheaper than the “pay me later” repair and the additional cost of fuel. One other than should be mentioned, and that is down time. The repairs on the boiler will take a great deal of down time, whereas water treatment has no down time. I do not know of anything that is more of a win, win situation than water treatment.

One caution, it is important to get a very good and honest water treatment consultant. Bad water treatment can lead to other problems. If your boilers are clean when your open

them up each year that a sign the consultant is doing a good job. Remember, the treatment must be put in the boiler and not just stored in a drum in the boiler room. Also, the boiler water must be tested regularly (daily if possible).

Treat your boiler good and they will be good to you.

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