

PROTECTIVE COATINGS APPLICATION



Xtreme™ Mix Proportioner Ideal For Shipyard Contractor's Protective Coating Applications

ABC Applicators use the Xtreme Mix in shipyards, as well as to paint Coast Guard buoys.



decades as shipyard painters. "We've used it all - brushes and rollers, cup guns, pressure pots, air spray, airless spray, single component sprayers and plural component proportioners. We even tested one system that was so huge we needed a crane to move it," he says. "We still own some of this equipment but we only use it if the job or circumstances require it. Our sprayer of choice is Graco's Xtreme Mix proportioning system."

According to Vickers, the Xtreme Mix is well suited for their type of work. "When we bid a job the coating material is already specified in the spec sheet. Usually the material is a plural component epoxy with material ratios that range up and down the scale."

This hasn't been a problem for ABC Applicators because the Xtreme Mix offers variable ratio selections from 1:1 to 10:0 with ratio accuracy of ± 5 percent. It's been able to handle all the coatings they've been required to spray.

"There hasn't been a single instance where the Xtreme Mix wasn't able to correctly proportion the material we're spraying. In addition, there have been times when we've had to change materials and material ratios during the day. In these cases, we simply purge

ABC Applicators, Mobile, AL, is a sandblasting and coatings contractor that specializes in new construction and rework contracts in local shipyards. The company has been in business 30 years and understands the intricacies of painting sea-faring vessels. If it floats, there's a good chance that ABC Applicators has painted it!

"We've done them all - from shrimp boats, off-shore supply vessels and chemical carriers to navy frigates," says Keith Vickers, who owns the business with his father and brother.

"Typically, the jobs we bid are the ones that shipyard

crews aren't interested in tackling themselves," he says. "It's usually interior work - in the holds or bilges of the ships and among the pipes - removing the old paint and applying a new coating. We're usually spraying 100 percent solids tank linings or other specialty materials designed to protect the ship's interior from rust and corrosion."

And although the shipyard work is enough to keep the Vickers' busy, they also paint all the buoys deployed by the Coast Guard on all U.S. interior and coastal waterways.

The company has used a lot of different application equipment during their three

CUSTOMER

ABC Applicators,
Mobile, Alabama

APPLICATION

Shipyards painting

OBJECTIVE

Sought affordable, low maintenance sprayer for multiple two component materials.

SOLUTION

Graco Xtreme™ Mix Proportioner

RESULTS

Cut material waste by 50% resulting in six month ROI

the fluid hose, switch materials, enter the new ratio into the control panel on the proportioner and the painters are ready to go. It takes only five minutes and we don't waste a drop of paint."

It's a lot simpler and faster than having to mechanically reconfigure the system.

The painters usually spray two coats of an anti-foulant and one coat of topcoat. They're striving for a 10 – 16 dry mil build.

Furthermore, since the Xtreme Mix proportions and mixes the base and catalyst on demand, material waste has dropped significantly. The alternative to proportioning the plural component materials was to hand-mix the two components. Hand-mixing always resulted in leftover material that had to be properly disposed of because of the mixed material's short pot life. Often, the cost of disposing this cured material was as high or higher than the materials' original per-gallon price.

"We've cut material waste by 50 percent," says Vickers. "Material savings alone allowed us to recoup the cost of the Xtreme Mix in only six months."

That's a significant return on investment!

Deadlines are another fact of life in the shipyards. "When a ship is in one of these yards for repair or maintenance, it could be losing hundreds of thousands of dollars every day. We have a very strict timeline to get our work done," he says. "There are no excuses! Speed and equipment reliability are essential."

"Typically, we run a multi-gun operation with the Xtreme Mix. We use 100-150 feet of fluid hose from the proportioner to each airless spray gun. Even with three painters spraying 100 percent solids paint, we have enough fluid pressure to atomize the material properly."

The Xtreme Mix also features Viscon® HP fluid heaters that allow the system to maintain consistent material temperature and fluid viscosity for uniform atomization. The painters achieve the best atomization of these 100 percent solids protective coatings using Graco's .415 to .423 spray tips. The narrower fan pattern is especially well suited for spraying among pipes.



Vickers also appreciates the proportioning system's durability. "We've been using the Xtreme Mix for six months, spraying some very tough coatings. We haven't had a single problem."

He also praises the system's "fixability".

"It's a simple system," he says. "Our own maintenance crew can keep the system in tiptop shape. It's easy to perform routine maintenance on it and if we ever have to tear it down, we can do it in our own shop. On the other hand, we've used equipment that had to be sent back to the manufacturer or its distributor for repair. That's not acceptable with the deadlines we work under."

"Furthermore, the service from our local Graco distributor is top notch."

"All in all, there's always somewhere we can use the Xtreme Mix every day. That's important to us because we paint 300 days a year – up and down the coast and at our own facility."

"It's portable. It's reliable. And the price was right. It's been a good investment," he concludes. •

ABC Contractor has applied a variety of different two component coatings using the Xtreme Mix. There hasn't been a single instance where the system wasn't able to correctly proportion the material.

**For additional product information or the name of a local authorized Graco distributor, call toll free 877-844-7226 in the U.S.A.
In Europe call (32) 89 770 700**