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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Patterson Pump Company Accomplishes A 150-Day 'Impossibility' At New Orleans' London Avenue Canal Station

In December of 2006, the U.S. Corps of Engineers changed its flood and storm water control strategy to increase pumping capacity to 5,200 cfs (2,300,000 GPM) with direct drive pumps at the London Avenue Canal, site of two major breaches during Katrina.

There was a problem. The manufacture of eight massive, mixed flow pumps to provide the needed pumping capacity would require 18 to 24 months. The new pumps were needed by mid-August, 2007, the beginning of hurricane season. Pump manufacturers considered the time frame an impossibility.

Subcontractor M.R. Pittman Group of Harahan, LA, through Ronnie Hebert of Environmental Technical Sales (ETEC) of Baton Rouge, approached President Al Huber and Patterson engineers to consider the impact these pumps would make on the critical recovery effort of the Greater New Orleans area. All other members of the recovery team were in place, providing infrastructure and foundational units; only the direct drive pumps were missing.

Patterson made the commitment for the manufacture, delivery and testing of eight special fitted, 68" x 72" SAFV Mixed Flow Pumps in a 150-day period. A contract was awarded on December 22, 2006.

While manufacturing was under way, other recovery team members installed new surge gates, discharge pipes and other foundational units of the pumping station in readiness for pump deliveries. All eight were delivered and installed on schedule.

Lengthy and critical dry-tests were conducted on the pumps during the second week of August, proving them ready for running in water. Wet-tests were conducted the following week and all eight pumps were officially accepted by the U.S. Corps of Engineers on August 15.

Col. Jeffrey Bedey, Commander of the Hurricane Protection Office of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, reflected on the total effort of putting the new pumping station into place with these remarks:

"It was on 15 August that we completed testing here at London Avenue Canal. We ran all eight of these pumps. An unbelievable effort. A team effort. I couldn't be prouder to be part of the team...that made history. Patterson Pump should be proud. They were there all along the way.

"How significant is delivery of eight massive pumps from an industry standard? It should have taken 18-24 months. Talk to any pump manufacturer or engineer who has built pumping stations before. The lead time on pumps of this magnitude is 18-24 months. So, how did Patterson deliver? Because they were committed...to the work going on here in the greater New Orleans area. They understood the significance of what was going on.

"What we are doing here in New Orleans is about more than just building pumps. It's about restoring the faith and confidence in the people. Not in the U.S. Corps of Engineers, but that inner faith and confidence such that people want to come back to this great community.

"It's not just hurricane protection. It's other things, like bringing schools back, churches back, law and order, the New Orleans Saints in football games. All of those things help to restore that faith and confidence. Patterson understood that. They understood the significance of showing progress.

"Deeds, not words. It's easy to talk, but if you're going to talk the talk, you're going to have to walk the walk. Patterson walked the walk.



*Col. Jeffrey Bedey,
Commander of the Hurricane Protection Office of the U.S. Corps of Engineers*



One of eight Patterson pumps being installed at the London Avenue Canal pumping station.

“How much confidence do I have in these pumps? They are dry-tested before they are ever put into the water. In total, they are 12-1/2 hours of running in the dry. When these pumps passed that test the level of confidence that they will move water exceeds 99%. I’m here to tell you today that the level of confidence is 100%. We turned every one of those pumps on after they passed the dry-test and they all moved water at their designed capacity.

“22 December - 15 August, from award of contract, delivery of pumps, installation and full testing and acceptance of those pumps. I challenge the engineering community to find a greater example of making things happen.

“Patterson had a strong relationship all the way.”

Mike Pittman, Owner of M.R. Pittman Group, LLC, had this to say about the Patterson feat:

“This challenge to engineer and supply these pumps from conception to delivery was difficult at best and had never been done before.

“Since the day we awarded the contract, Al Huber and his whole group made a commitment to supply and fulfill that order in the time frame specified (150 days). When we issued the contract to Patterson, within 48 hours they were in the production phase for the lead time items in the project.

“Most people thought it couldn’t happen, but Al’s hands-on, daily involvement and personal touch on this project was probably the instrumental part of why this equipment got here and is operating today.”

Patterson President Al Huber was quick to point out the reason for the successful effort:

“The dedication and best efforts of all Patterson personnel was the key to our ability to meet such critical deadlines. It could not have been accomplished without a total team effort—a Patterson trademark.”

Patterson Pump Company is a subsidiary of The Gorman-Rupp Company of Mansfield, Ohio.

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This Commanders Coin of Excellence, Presented to Albert Huber, President of Patterson Pump Company, by Colonel Jeffery Bedey, Commander of HPO, Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans, in recognition of the Teamwork and Dedication shown in the recovery work of the London Ave. Canal.

