

# Removal of Sludges from Old Crude Oil Storage Tanks, Onshore UK

A small oil company, which operated several mature onshore crude oil well-sites in the UK, had to remove and replace a number of old single-skinned crude oil storage tanks at one of its well-sites to comply with environmental legislation. After many years of use bitumen sludges had built up in the bottoms of the tanks until they were nearly one quarter full. It had become necessary to remove this bitumen before the tanks could be cleaned out and cut up for removal.



The bitumen sludges needed be liquefied so that they could be pumped out and taken to the nearest oil refinery for processing. The location of the site was environmentally sensitive and precluded the use of hot oil/diesel to dissolve out the sludges or hot water/steam. After analysis of the sludges in the tanks, Global Advantech's Oil-Phase Demulsifier + Viscosity Modifier DC205 was selected for application to sludges to liquefy them without heat so that they could be pumped out from the tanks.

The DC205 was added to the tanks at a

rate of 2% to the estimated volume of sludge present and circulated with air-driven pumps. Over a period of seven days all the bitumen sludges were liquefied and pumped out for transfer to the refinery.

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- Recovery of hydrocarbons from oil and gas production wastes and sludges.
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