

# STRAIGHT to the POINT

## VTC Rises to the Occasion for Central Texas

When you have a very sensitive substance that needs to be moved to meet a very short deadline, there are not a lot of people you can call. Larry Padfield of US Development learned this when charged with finding a way to move 700,000 gallons per day of ethanol, a high-octane fuel produced from grain alcohol, into Dallas/Fort Worth to comply with new environmental legislation. And he needed to do it in 60 days.



### SITUATION

“Several of our customers were telling us about the need for ethanol logistics in the Dallas area,” recounts Larry Padfield, of US Development. “We began working with Union Pacific Railroad on putting a project together with a goal of finding one solution that would work given all of the time pressures. **Ventura Transfer Company was the solution.**”

You get the extras when we go  
**THE EXTRA MILE**

VTC designed this customized metered pump to move 400 gallons of ethanol per minute. The pump also ensures that the ethanol is not exposed to any moisture or contaminants.

See *The Extra Mile* inside>



***After the deadline, non-compliant fuel blenders would be open to lawsuits and penalties for environmental contamination.***

#### **MEETING A GOVERNMENT MANDATE**

The long-term use of Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (MTBE) as a fuel additive has resulted in groundwater contamination in many areas across the United States. To combat this, recent legislation has banned the use of MTBE in 25 states. Ethanol is being used as an MBTE replacement due to its ability to increase octane and reduce environmental damage.

In Texas, the Dallas/Forth Worth area was most affected by the new legislation. After the hurricanes swept through the Gulf Coast, only 60 days remained to comply with the new mandate and the government was not in a position to extend the timeframe. **After the deadline, non-compliant fuel blenders would be open to lawsuits and penalties for environmental contamination.** U.S. Development began its search for a company that could come in and safely move ethanol into the Dallas/Fort Worth area, without compromising the integrity of the substance, before the deadline.

Ethanol is sustainable energy resource that has the potential to reduce the United State's importation of oil by hundreds of thousands of barrels per day. Made from corn, it is a colorless, extremely flammable substance that requires unique handling. **Ethanol must be stored in specially designed tanks and blended at the plants in order to avoid contamination.**

***"We knew these folks had the facilities, the personnel and the expertise to do the job."***

"We were trying to put the pieces of the puzzle together as fast as we could," said Jerry Finan, Senior Product Manager, Union Pacific Railroad. "We needed a viable, dependable solution to get the ethanol to the Dallas/Fort Worth ethanol market." **VTC's ability to position resources in a timely manner with employees and equipment was a critical factor.** We also relied on their



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**THE EXTRA MILE**

#### **EXTRA ACCURACY**

**As accurate as filling station pumps, VTC's metered pumps are calibrated monthly and designed to be accurate to twenty five one-hundredths of a percent per gallon.**

reputation in the industry for quality work and our own experience with them.”

### VTC MAKES IT WORK

Typically, an ethanol transfer facility can take as long as eighteen to twenty four months to construct due to the need for specialized equipment and permits. In this case, there was not enough time to construct a permanent facility so a solution borne from out-of-the-box thinking was required. Some of the other transfer companies in the industry were able to give seven to nine month estimates of completion, but even that was too long. VTC was able to give and meet a 45-day deadline.

VTC was uniquely qualified for the transloading job on several fronts. Charlie Ring of VTC remembers the challenge. “It was an exciting project and one we were definitely equipped to handle. We know the market well and have experience navigating the permitting process so we were able to get the right permits quickly and avoid the pitfalls that can lead to delays.”

Ring continues, “We were also able to custom design metered pumps that were used to transfer the ethanol from Union Pacific railcars to trucks. We managed to get two transfer pumps made in 20 days so that the oil companies didn’t have to shut down production. There are companies that make transfer units, but their production was four to five months out and we didn’t have that kind of time.”

***“Because we were able to get the transfer going before the deadline, we were able to attract customers right away.”***

VTC has an outstanding safety record and a strong reputation within the industry for meeting the most stringent safety standards. Because of the sensitive, highly flammable nature of ethanol, anyone working with it must be specially trained and certified to work with hazardous material. VTC’s personnel fit the bill and were sent to Dallas to facilitate the transfer.



#### EXTRA ASSURANCE

The highly trained personnel at VTC take extra grounding precautions when working with ethanol. In addition to grounding cables, no cell phones are allowed due to potential static electricity.



#### EXTRA ACTION

The facility can receive and store 60 car unit trains of ethanol. VTC keeps tarps on the ground to prevent ground contamination. Spill containment is VTC’s foremost consideration when protecting the environment.



"The throughput has exceeded everyone's expectations.

Because we were able to get operational before the deadline, we attracted a large base of customers almost from the beginning. Even though there is some competition now, customers have stayed loyal because we have a proven record now of doing it right," said Larry Padfield of the project. "This has been a winning situation for everyone involved."

***Tight deadlines, tough challenges  
and satisfied customers are all in  
a day's work.***

For over 135 years, VTC has built their reputation on being the company that rises to any occasion. Tight deadlines, tough challenges and satisfied customers are all in a day's work for the dedicated people at VTC. VTC played an important part in getting ethanol to Dallas in time to meet the compliance deadline and the people at VTC view this project as another affirmation of their commitment to their customers and to the safety of their people and the environment.



**ventura**  
TRANSFER COMPANY®

2418 E 223rd Street  
Long Beach, CA 90810  
310.549.1660

[venturatransfer.com](http://venturatransfer.com)