



PROBLEM SOLVED™ PAPER

SOLUTION: Martin® Railcar Opener

INDUSTRY: Cement & Bulk Transportation

LOCATION: CEMEX Cement Terminal Sacramento, California



The Martin® Railcar Opener provides up to 2,500 foot pounds of torque to power open stubborn railcar gates.

PROBLEM

Opened in 1999, the CEMEX Cement Terminal in Sacramento supplies cement for concrete and ready-mix operations in central California. Cement is delivered to the terminal by rail from CEMEX manufacturing facilities in California—either the Victorville plant, roughly 250 miles (640 km) away or from the Davenport plant, 165 miles (265 km) away. Up to four times a week, the terminal receives unit trains of 40 railcars at a time. Unloading proceeds round the clock, one car every 40 minutes, until all cars are emptied allowing the train to return to the manufacturing plant for another load. To keep the trains in motion, and the terminal's five silos—with a total capacity of 8,500 tons—full, it is important that unloading proceed smoothly, that means each railcar needs to be opened and emptied without lost time or unexpected hassles. Problems in opening the discharge gates of the bottom-dump hopper cars could slow the process. The plant needs a system to make sure the car gates could be opened without the backbreaking labor of using a bar to open the gates or requiring the unloading crew to crawl underneath the car to work on the gate.

SOLUTION

To make sure the railcar unloading can proceed with a minimum of problems, the terminal uses Martin® Railcar Openers to open carbottom gates. The rugged air-powered Martin® Railcar Opener powers open the most stubborn hopper car gate with 2500 ft-lb (346 kg-m) of torque at 90 psi (6.2 bar). Its adjustable base allows one worker to maneuver wheeled cart through tight spaces. Use of the Martin® Railcar Opener reduces safety risks for personnel and improves unloading efficiency.

RESULTS

"The Martin® Railcar Opener is a great piece of equipment," says Terminal Manager Don Wilkey. "We have two units—one at each of our unloading stations—so we can open several cars without having to go look for a gate opener. Our unloading crew would sure hate to try to get along without it. We think it's the best door opener on the market, bar none."

