

## A Clean Slate

**W**hen Hank Berberat arrives at most construction sites, he doesn't usually see random bystanders trying to enter the gates right behind him, attempting to sneak a peek at what's going on inside. But when the construction project is New York City's World Trade Center Memorial, dealing with the public's heightened curiosity comes with the territory.

In a way, the high-profile nature of the WTC Memorial is a big reason Berberat became involved with the site. Berberat is the owner of Berco Tank, a Watertown, Connecticut-based company specializing in fuel storage tank rentals and sales.

"Our focus is on tanks that offer secondary containment," says Berberat, who's been in the fuel tank business

for 20 years. "Sometimes customers need tanks for hazardous materials, but primarily they're using them for fuel supply for their machines."

At the WTC Memorial site, the process of fueling excavators, dozers and other construction vehicles is not as simple as driving up to a pump at the local gas station, given that many of these machines are performing excavation and foundation work in a hole 85 feet deep. This leaves only one option for equipment fueling—using cranes to lower fuel tanks from grade level down to the bottom of the hole.

Traditional diesel storage tanks are not designed to be moved while full of fuel. As a result, many contractors will hire welding shops or bring in fabricators to modify these types of tanks with eye hooks or other features that enable the tanks to be hoisted by crane. Such was the case with several tanks at the WTC site.

"Nine out of 10 times a modified tank might do the job just fine," Berberat says. "But it can be problematic because generally there's no real engineering involved. It's usually just a guy in a shop making adjustments to where it appears to be a structurally sound unit."

In October 2008, possibly due to inadequately spaced eye hooks or some similar engineering failure, a modified tank on the site was unable to contain a fuel surge as it was being moved, causing a significant amount of diesel fuel to be spilled. This incident raised some serious envi-



Workers lower a Transcube fuel transportation tank into the hole at the World Trade Center Memorial site. Contractors began using Transcube tanks after a modified tank spilled fuel while being moved.

**COMPANY:**  
Berco Tank

**LOCATION:**  
Watertown, Connecticut

**PROJECT:**  
Transfer fuel safely and efficiently in an 85-foot hole at the World Trade Center Memorial site in New York City.

**EQUIPMENT USED:**  
Transcube fuel transportation tanks by Western International Inc.

ronmental and safety concerns—concerns that would be critical under any circumstance, but even more so at a job under as much scrutiny as the WTC Memorial.

After the spill, various contractors at the site began to seek out a better option for fuel storage and transport.

“They needed a tank that was legally certified to be lifted with fuel inside,” Berberat says. “And they need fuel there everyday, so they had to come up with an answer quickly. I got a phone call and told them about a product that would fit the bill.”

It had been only a month since Berberat himself had located such a solution. When founding Berco Tank in September 2008, Berberat was looking for a unique line of fuel tanks to help differentiate his new company from the competition. His search led him to Western International Inc. and its line of Transcube fuel transportation tanks.

Featuring internal baffling to minimize fuel surge while in transit, Transcube tanks are UL 142 approved and compliant with U.S. Department of Transportation standards for road transport of diesel fuel. The units are designed to prevent fuel spilling or leakage, built with an inner tank completely enclosed within an outer wall structure that provides secondary containment.

“Being able to transport a container while it still has fuel in it is a significant advantage,” says Berberat, whose fleet has grown to include 13 Transcube tanks. Transcube tanks look like the name implies—they are rectangular in shape like a box. The shape allows the tanks to be stacked to save space in rental yards or cramped jobsites.

In addition to the basic product qualifications, Berberat was able to provide contractors at the WTC Memorial with ratings testing information for officials monitoring the site. Contractors also had a chance to view demonstration images of a Transcube being lifted and dropped without incident.

The use of Transcube units on the project started with two companies. As word spread on the WTC Memorial site, several other contractors, many of whom had used their own tanks for years, made the change to Transcube.

“Some companies decided to use Transcube even though they aren’t moving their fuel,” Berberat says. “They’re taking a proactive approach to make sure they don’t have any issues with inspectors down the road. All told, there are 10 different companies using our tanks at the site.”

Berco Tank has supplied 16 fuel storage tanks to those 10 companies. Among the 16 Transcube tanks, three different models have been utilized, with those models offering capacities of 132, 264 and 528 gallons, respectively.

According to Berberat, users like how easy it is to handle the tanks. The tanks have full-load eye hooks on all four corners and forklift pockets on all four sides, meaning the tanks can be moved to almost any position on the jobsite.

While contractors initially sought out a new tank solution for containment of fuel during transport, they have also seen the



**TOP: The Transcube tanks provide secondary containment with an outer wall structure completely enclosing the inner tank. ABOVE: Several companies are performing excavation and foundation work at the WTC Memorial site. Contractors are using the Transcube tanks to bring diesel down from grade level to fuel their machines.**

units prevent some incidental messes associated with fuel tank use. “Handling fuels is typically a messy scenario when you’re taking hoses on and off and that sort of thing,” Berberat says. “With Transcube everything is contained within the cabinet so you’ve just got a much cleaner situation.”

Most of Berco’s Transcube units are expected to be used for the duration of the WTC Memorial project, which is slated for completion by 2013. As the project progresses, the tanks will switch from being lowered into a hole to traveling upward as the buildings grow story by story. There’s much work left to be done, but with the proper transport equipment on hand, cleaning up fuel spills at the WTC Memorial site should no longer be part of the job. **SP**