





# Not Just ‘NATIONWIDE’



*Nationwide Boiler Incorporated has rented and sold boilers and related equipment to clients in six continents and provided essential equipment to restore steam services after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York City. Now celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, the company attributes its longevity to a simple combination of excellent products and quality service. The Fremont, California-based firm has also developed an expertise in environmentally friendly boiler solutions.*

Written by Nate Hendley

**N**ationwide sells and rents boilers, trailer-mounted mobile watertube boilers, temporary steam plants featuring firetube boilers, and associated support equipment. The company also provides start-up services, training and around-the-clock support in the form of maintenance and inspection. Main sectors served include pulp and paper, food processing, chemicals, petroleum refining, utilities and power generation, ethanol, manufacturing, hospitals, universities and colleges.

The biggest sector for the company, in terms of both sales and rentals, would be “petroleum refineries and petrochemical companies,” says Marketing Manager Chelsey Ryker.

For petroleum and chemical clients in particular, Nationwide offers a range of 750 psi, 750 Fahrenheit superheated watertube boilers specifically designed for high-pressure applications. Its rental fleet is built for mid- to high-pressure applications (150 psi to 750 psi) and includes trailer-mounted watertube boilers from 30,000 lb/hr to 125,000 lb/hr, mobile boiler rooms from 47.5 hp to 1,000 hp, a range of skid-mounted firetube and watertube boilers, mobile feedwater treatment systems, and other boiler related equipment.

The business split between rentals and sales is “basically 50/50,” says Ryker. Often, a company that has acquired a boiler system will rent a temporary boiler while its own system is down for maintenance.

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In addition to the Fremont headquarters, Nationwide has a sales and service office in Visalia, California and company representatives in roughly twenty U.S. states, as well as Canada and Mexico. The firm has equipment storage facilities across the U.S.

According to Ryker, roughly fifteen percent of company sales are international. “We do intend on growing our business internationally. That’s where our overseas representatives come in,” she states.

Nationwide does not manufacture its own boilers but sells products from reputable boiler manufacturers such as ▶▶



- ▶ Babcock & Wilcox and Superior Boiler Works. The company does, however, create customized solutions for clients, such as complete transportable steam plants both enclosed and on an open-trailer.

The firm buys new equipment to stock its rental fleet and takes care to maintain that equipment. "When a boiler returns from a rental, we have a comprehensive inspection and maintenance procedure that we follow. We also have the capability to test-fire the equipment at our facility," explains Ryker. "All equipment is thoroughly serviced and tested before being shipped to a client."

**"The company takes safety and quality very seriously and has a slew of industry certifications."**

The company will purchase second-hand boilers to add to its sales inventory if they are in good shape. These boilers are cleaned and reconditioned by Nationwide and upgraded when necessary. This work is done in a 26,000-square-foot shop in Fremont that includes a forty-ton crane. The shop employs



📷 NBI Ground Breaking

welders, mechanics, electricians and technicians and handles fabrication, maintenance and equipment assembly duties.

Nationwide Boiler has a team of "very seasoned professional engineers," who can handle custom requests, says Ryker. Engineering services include CAD (computer assisted design) work, project management and boiler performance testing.

The company was founded in 1967 as Nationwide Boiler Rentals by Richard 'Dick' Bliss, in Mountain View, California. The firm was initially only focused on rentals but soon expanded into sales and dropped the word 'rentals' from its corporate name in 1977. In 1982, the firm relocated to its current hometown of Fremont.

Nationwide came up with the innovative idea of mounting large package watertube boilers on dedicated trailers so they could be transported on highways. The firm also has a strong

environmental commitment, reflected by its decision, two decades ago, to convert its entire rental boiler fleet to meet low NOx (nitrogen oxides) emissions standards. In 2008, the company launched a new segment, Nationwide Environmental Solutions. The CataStak™ SCR (selective catalytic reduction) system, introduced in 2009, is one of the flagship products of this strategic business unit. The CataStak™ SCR system can be used with boilers, fired heaters, heat recovery steam generators, gas turbines, and other fired applications to reduce harmful emissions to near zero levels.

To mark its fiftieth anniversary, Nationwide held an open house in May that included facility tours, local food trucks and live music. Ryker attributes Nationwide's longevity to high-end equipment and a customer-oriented focus. "We always want to please our customers. All of our new products – the new innovative solutions that we come out with – are designed around what our customers have said they need," she states.

Nationwide Boiler has roughly fifty employees at present. When the company does hire new staff, "attitude is key. We feel that attitude is more important than aptitude. People can be trained as long as they are self-motivated and want to do well for the company," says Ryker. "We want our employees to be



**"Within days of the attack, a temporary steam plant was running, providing heat and steam-services to buildings in the area."**

passionate about both their work and family life, to always be customer focused, and provide excellent service. Remember, service is everything." ►►



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**"All equipment actually is thoroughly inspected and tested before being shipped to a client."**

▶ Nationwide is pre-qualified with ISNetwork, a global organization that offers an online database of contractor and supplier management companies that meet government health, safety and quality compliance requirements. It is also a member of Avetta (formerly PICS Auditing), a firm that connects organizations with qualified vendors, suppliers and contractors.

The company takes safety and quality very seriously and has a slew of industry certifications. Its boilers and other equipment are made, assembled and tested in accordance with ASME standards, and it has worked on several MIL-SPECs (military specifications – standards set for doing U.S. Department of Defense contracts). Its manufacturing, fabrication and repair work is inspected by third-party auditors.

Nationwide has an active quality control personnel and "a very good safety program as well. Quality and safety are top priority here. It shows in our experience modification rate (EMR), which is given to us by insurance companies. It is the lowest possible for our [sector], which is 0.61. Quality really touches every job at Nationwide, from welding to start-up to sending out proposals," adds Ryker. The EMR insurance sector rating takes into account a company's safety record and the degree of risk in its operations.

One of the most noteworthy assignments Nationwide Boiler was involved with occurred following the New York terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. After 9/11, several buildings

around the area were left without heat due to damaged steam lines. Energy company Consolidated Edison (Con Ed) arranged for Nationwide Boiler to send a pair of trailer-mounted boilers and support equipment, including a van with a self-contained water treatment system, to Manhattan. Nationwide shipped the equipment from facilities in New Jersey and California and the units were installed at Ground Zero. Within days of the attack, a temporary steam plant was running, providing heat and steam-services to buildings in the area.

Another memorable project involved a contract with the U.S. Navy to supply eight transportable boiler systems for the Navy facilities command in Port Hueneme, CA. The low NOx steam plants in question consisted of self-contained units inside transportable steel frames. The contract involved everything from conceptual engineering (including CAD drawings), fabrication and assembly, extensive testing and project management. Everything had to be done within stringent MIL-SPECs. The project was carried out successfully with all eight steam plants shipped to the Navy in a timely fashion.

Over two days this May, Nationwide hosted its 37th annual charity golf tournament in Pebble Beach, California. The event attracted over one hundred people and raised almost \$60,000. "We coordinate silent and live auctions, raffles, and other fun events during the tournament to raise money and give back to causes that are worthy," says Ryker.



This year, the company supported Make-A-Wish® Greater Bay Area and a scholarship program for the American Boiler Manufacturers Association (ABMA).

Nationwide is always on the lookout to grow and expand, which is one reason why the firm routinely introduces new products. Ryker cites the CataStak™ SCR system as an example. More recently, the company introduced the DataStak™, a boiler emissions and efficiency monitoring system, another example of the firm's commitment to green solutions.

Asked to name the company's biggest challenge, Ryker says, "definitely people. Drawing young people into a business like this, which can be considered dated and isn't well known, is a task in its own. It's not something that we are taught about in school. [Our industry is] very under the radar, but it's also very critical. We need to find more young prospects that are interested in learning about boilers and the industry."

Nationwide has a detailed website and takes part in various trade shows, including the largest power generation event,

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Power-Gen International, being held in Las Vegas, NV this December. The firm also has a social media presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, Twitter and Instagram, and does some advertising in industry magazines and buyer's guides.

Nationwide Boiler also benefits from good word-of-mouth on behalf of pleased clients. "Our previous business promotes us as well. The majority of our customer base is repeat business, and we get a lot of new customers who were referred to us by companies that we have worked with in the past," says Ryker.

As for the future, "We see ourselves doubling in size five years down the road. Expansion, growth, we're all about it," she adds. ■

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