

GLO288

Aluminum radiators: Initiative pays off

A. A. FIELD, London England

Aluminum radiator production in Italy topped 100 million sq ft of heating surface in 1973 and consumed 3,000 tons of alloy.

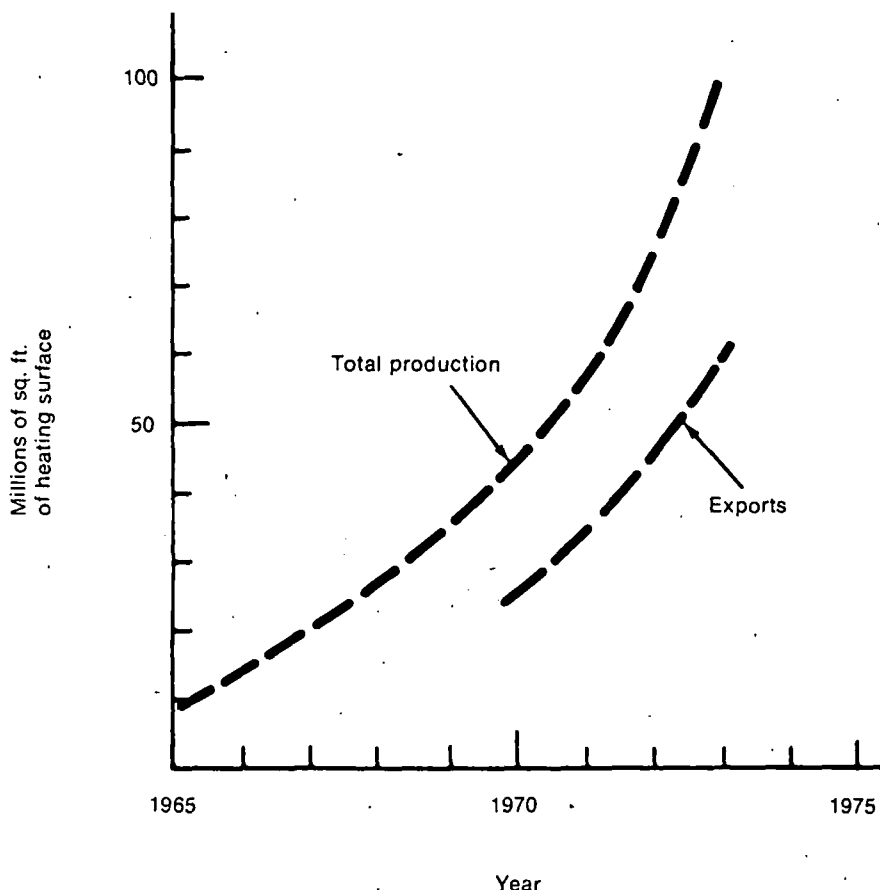
Some 30 manufacturers make up the industry, which has one of the highest growth rates in Italy. In 1973, 57 percent of production went to other European countries and overseas. Aluminum radiators now comprise about 20 percent of the home market.

Construction

Aluminum as a construction medium for radiators is not new, but in the last 10 years, improved techniques of pressure die casting and extrusion have realized the full potential of the versatile medium. In pressure casting, virtually any configuration is possible. This technique is used by most manufacturers and represents the larger share of the market.

Extruded radiators, on the other hand, are limited to a linear form, although they can be made larger. Heating surface in the form of ribs or fins is visible in some makes, but this can be attractive with imaginative design. The extrusion process uses more metal — about 1 lb per sq ft of heating surface instead of ¾ lb per sq ft in the pressure cast type. An advantage of the extruded section radiator is the possibility of using higher pressures (about 200 psi), which is useful for tall blocks or systems connected directly to district heating mains.

The pressure cast radiator is generally made to present a flat finished surface to the room. It is assembled from sections (in the same way as the traditional cast iron radiator, using screwed nipples), and each section is generally built to form a convector stack. The internal con-



1 Growth of aluminum radiator production in Italy.

figuration is generally integral fins or ribs that are large enough to create separate vertical air channels. The top of the radiator is either left open or slotted or perforated in some way to direct the convected air into the room. The flat front forms a primary radiating surface. Aluminum is a more plastic medium than cast iron, and the die casting technique gives a much smoother finish. Lines can be sharper and finer detail can be produced. In some makes, the basic section is made symmetrical, front to back, so that it can be installed either way

round. This eliminates any problems of handling on the finished radiator.

Extruded section radiators are assembled in the same way, using screwed aluminum nipples. The assembled radiator can take various forms from the exposed linear fin section to designs made from flat face sections.

Additional information on material covered in What's new in Europe may be obtained by writing to A. A. Field in care of Heating/Piping/Air Conditioning.

What's new in Europe

All designs aim at producing a high ratio of primary surface, which is directly irrigated by the heated water. Fin efficiency is kept high by using a substantial thickness at the root that tapers out to the edge.

Esthetics

In a recent interview, Camillo Tretti, commercial director of Perani, one of the largest Aluminum radiator manufacturers in Italy, ascribed a large measure of the phenomenal success of the aluminum radiator to its appearance. Architects and interior designers in particular are selecting makes for this reason alone — in spite of the cost disadvantages compared with pressed steel. The Perani design radiator, for example, was selected for display in the Vienna Museum of Modern Art. "Instead of having to search for somewhere to hide the radiator," said Tretti, "architects are beginning to look upon aluminum radiators as part of the decor."

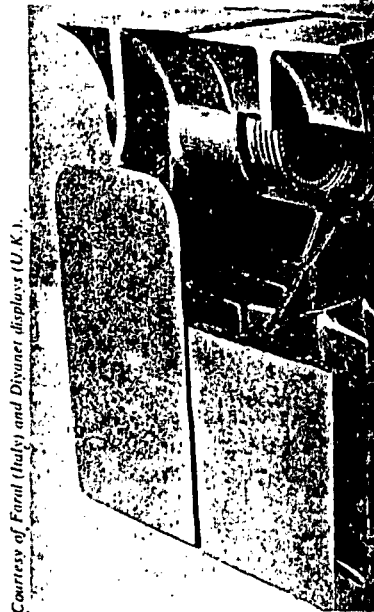
All makes are finished with a stove enamelled surface, or are

anodized; most manufactures offer a wide choice of colors. Decorated radiators can also be bought. Designs can be chosen from a standard selection, which includes geometrical patterns, flower designs, classic theme motifs, etc. A screen printing service now offered by a manufacturer allows original design to be created for a particular room. Artificial wood grain finishes are also on the market. Anodized radiators have the advantage of an indefinitely lasting finish, but color range and density are more limited.

The convection outlet on some models is arranged to project the heated air forward. This reduces wall staining behind the radiator and promotes lasting appearance.

Performance and cost

Aluminum radiators weigh less per Btuh emitted than cast iron or steel ones. The difference for cast iron is roughly one-quarter of the weight; and for steel, it is about two-thirds. The actual value depends on the model considered,



Courtesy of Faral (Italy) and Divaner displays (U.K.).

Cutaway of pressure die cast aluminum radiator. Note the conventional nickel jointing technique, and the use of taper finned surface for secondary convection.

whether finned, column, or tipanel.

On the average, the emission of a square foot of heating surface is between about 150 to 170 Btuh for a 70°F temperature differential. This is the same region as a single panel steel radiator and considerably more than the equivalent — at least in basic design — in a cast iron radiator.

Relating the heat output of a radiator length is a useful criterion by which to judge room space requirements. An aluminum radiator 24 in. high and 4 in. deep would emit about 4000 Btuh per ft., whereas a double panel steel radiator would emit about 1500 Btuh per ft. An output comparable with that of the aluminum radiator would be reached by four or six column cast iron radiator.

The question of performance testing has not yet been standardized. Most European manufacturers are adopting the calorimeter technique in which a basic design module is tested in terms of real output and not equated to a developed or fictitious surface. The recently formed trade association for the industry (Cersa Italiana Radiatori Alluminio) is the subject of standardized rates

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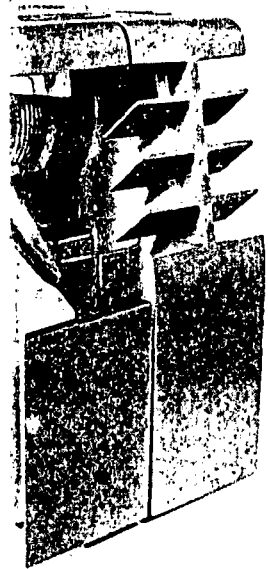
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aluminum convector radiator. These are deeper in section than ordinary radiators, contain more water, and have louvered access doors.

Courtesy of Fural (Italy) and Divonnet displays (U.K.).

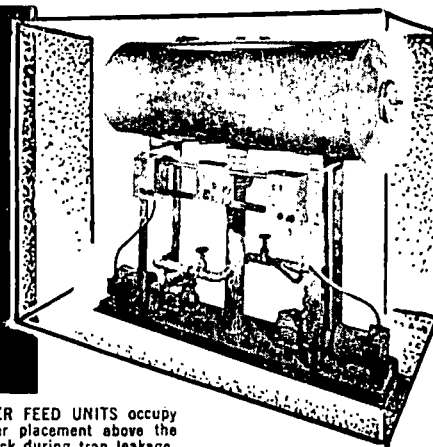
... priorities. Unification of water room techniques is known to lead to a fall in emission if it was derived from the foot of heating surface. Although many Italian engineers already use standard designs, such as the well known 'E' type, some will have to accept upgrading when changing heat output rating.

... al, aluminum radiators are available at about 130 to 150 psi for domestic use, around 90 to 100 psi. There are many types of extruded section radiators, however, working at pressures can reach about 200 psi. Aluminum radiators are cheaper than traditional designs in that they are lighter but still cost more than steel. However, the difference is not great as the market builds up. The traditional cost of welding is taken into account and the advantage is already with aluminum radiator.

... 15 years or so that aluminum radiators have been used, no corrosion have been reported. The general opinion is that aluminum offers a longer life than steel on closed circuits.

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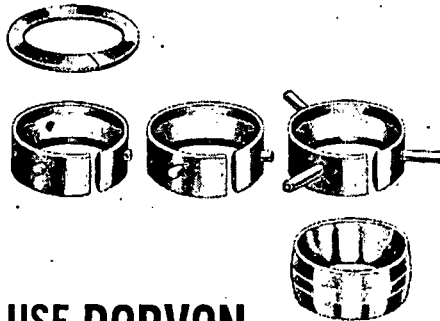
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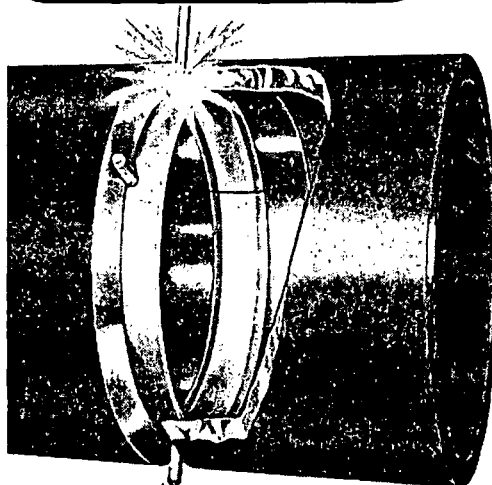
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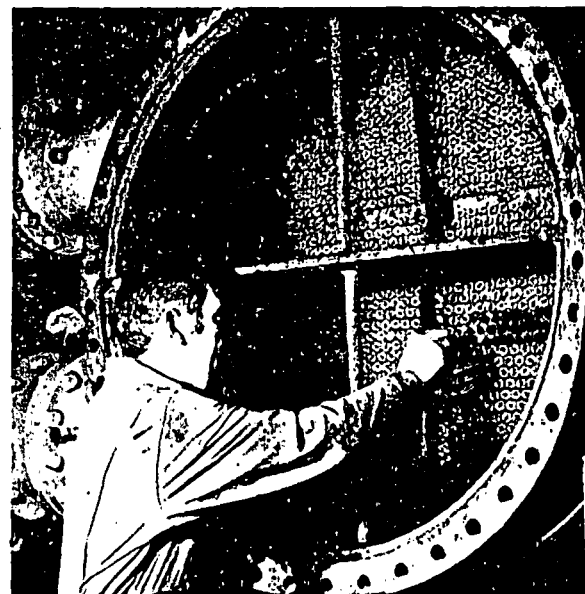
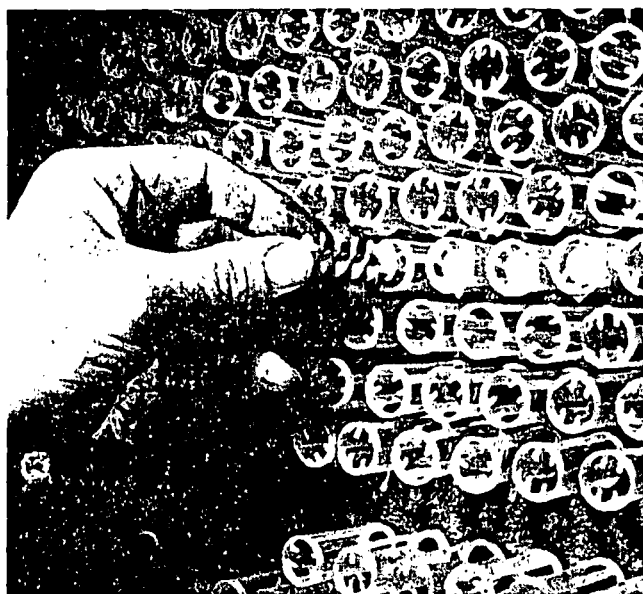
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Brush cleaning of condenser tubes saves power, costs

\$10,156 investment returns \$8639 in power savings the first year and restores chiller to full capacity



By RICHARD W. KRAGH, Plant Engineer, 3M Company, Bedford Park, Ill.

Centrifugal refrigeration chillers operate with a small temperature difference between the refrigerant vapor and the leaving condenser water, normally less than 10 F. Any insulation between the refrigerant and the water, such as condenser tube fouling, tends to increase the temperature difference at the expense of more electric power.

By installing an on-line brush cleaning system for the condenser tubes in a 600 ton refrigeration machine — used to clean the tubes automatically three times a day — we were able to save \$8639 in elec-

tric power the first year. Our total cost was \$10,156 (\$6156 for the system plus \$4000 for installation).

Two 250 ton chillers at the same location have been similarly equipped. The cost and resulting savings are not included in the above figures, however.

The problem

At the Bedford Park plant of the 3M Company, a problem with fouling of the condenser tubes of the refrigeration units had existed for several years. The plant includes three centrifugal chillers, one 600 ton unit and two 250 ton units. These provide all chilled water for both process and building comfort

cooling. Heat from the chillers rejected to two cooling towers.

The condenser tube fouling experienced was in the form of a slimy deposit that would cling tenaciously to the insides of the condenser tubes. It had been the practice to shut down the chillers for mechanical cleaning, sometimes as often as bimonthly. The result of the sludge buildup was a loss in heat transfer coefficient, as shown in Fig. 1. The loss in heat transfer not only increased the power requirements to operate the chillers, but more significantly, the units were unable to deliver chilled water at the temperature required for process. When the temperature increase in the chiller

occurred, it became necessary either to slow down the process equipment or shut it down entirely.

The annual cost of electric power wasted because of fouled tubes (\$39) and the annual cost of labor and mechanical cleaning of the tubes (\$40) totaled \$13,679 (as detailed in this article.) This cost was relatively minor, however, compared to the cost of loss of production for the entire plant when a chiller was unable to maintain the desired chilled water temperature because of tube fouling. Adding all these factors together, we concluded that a system that would maintain clean condenser tubes in a chiller would pay for itself in a matter of months!

Changes in feedwater treatment chemicals and formulations produced no significant changes in operating results. Table 1 presents analysis of the deposits.

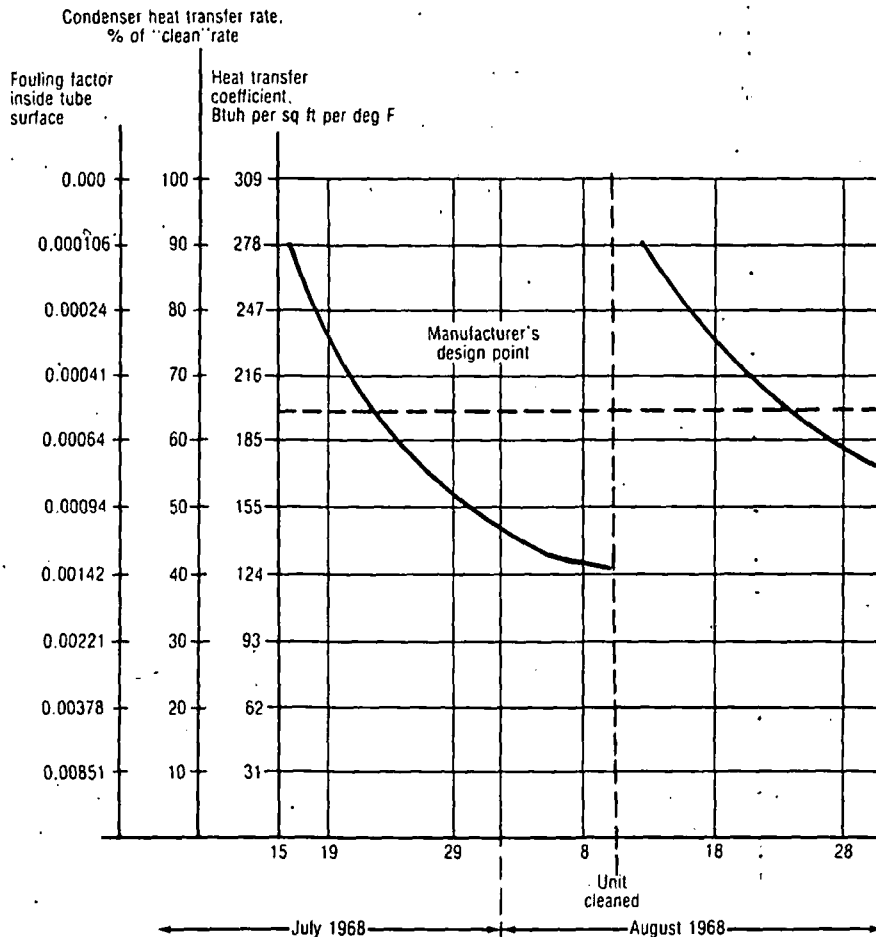
After hearing of the successful solution of a similar problem with 24 refrigeration machines¹ through the application of a new type of automatic on-line brush cleaning system for condenser tubes², we decided to investigate the possibility of applying a system at Bedford Park.

Btu analyzer test results

Our studies convinced us of the utility of the proposed system to eliminate fouling and upgrade

operating efficiency in typical chiller plants with normal amounts of condenser tube fouling. But because of the severe fouling at Bedford Park, we decided to carry out a test to determine the rate of fouling and the effectiveness of the brush cleaning system in eliminating such fouling. For the test, we entered

into a contract with the supplier for engineering services and the use of a Btu analyzer. The Btu analyzer, shown in Fig. 2, made it possible to determine the fouling rate in chiller condenser tubes using cooling water from the plant cooling tower. The unit consisted of a two-tube condenser in a standard pipe shell.



1 Heat transfer coefficient versus time for performance of 600 ton centrifugal chiller prior to installation of condenser brush cleaning system.

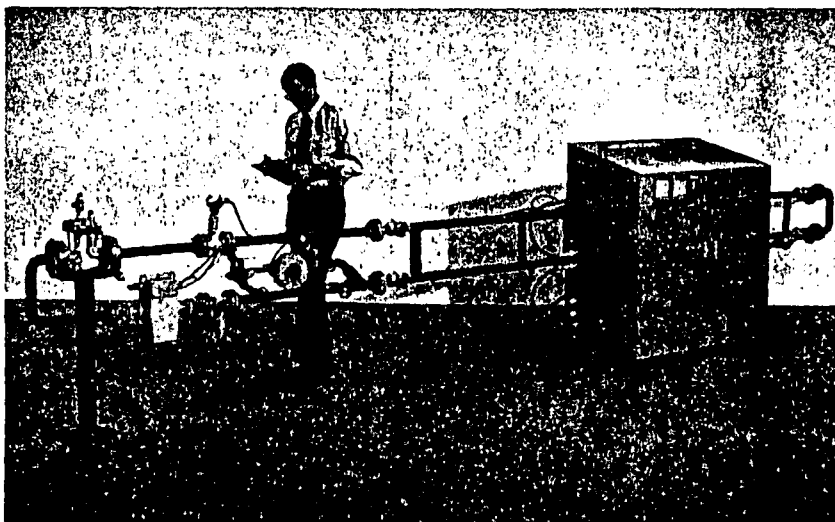
Vern E. "Continuous Cleaning Ups Chiller Performance." — *Power*, June 1974. Patent No. 3,319,710. Water Services America, Inc., P.O. Box 23421, Milwaukee, WI 53223

Table 1 — Analysis of sludge deposits in condenser tubes prior to installation of brush cleaning systems.

Composition of elements	Percent
Iron	43.1
Aluminum ¹	4.0
Silica	1.0
Nickel	0.8
Calcium (combined)	24.4
Organic matter ²	26.7

Chemical combination of elements	Percent
Sulfate	62.1
Phosphate	2.2
Iron oxide	6.0
Aluminum oxide	2.0
Organic matter	26.7

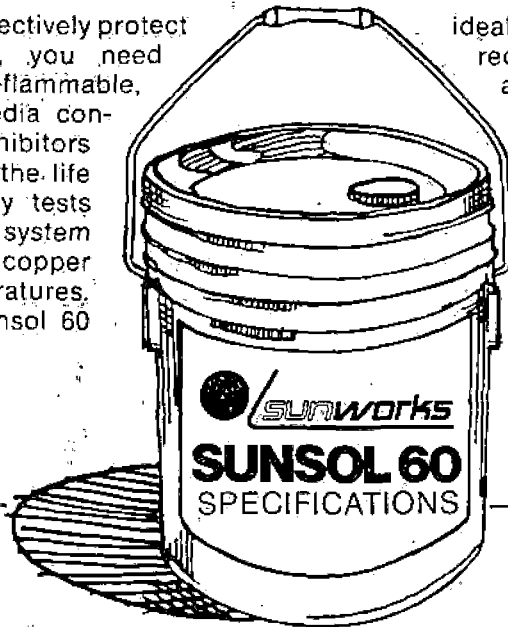
¹Probably from water treatment chemicals. ²Includes water of crystallization.



2 Btu analyzer used to determine condenser tube fouling factor.

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VISCOSITY:	0°C ... 40 cps 20°C ... 10 cps 40°C ... 4 cps
SURFACE TENSION:	25°C ... 42.5 dynes/cm
VAPOR PRESSURE:	20°C ... 12 mm Hg
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BOILING POINT:	1000 mm ... 116°C ... 240°F 760 mm ... 109°C ... 228°F 300 mm ... 82°C ... 180°F
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-40°F	5 gal	0.5 gal	5.5 gal
-20°F	5 gal	1 gal	6 gal
0°F	5 gal	1.75 gal	6.75 gal
10°F	5 gal	5 gal	10 gal
20°F	5 gal	10 gal	15 gal

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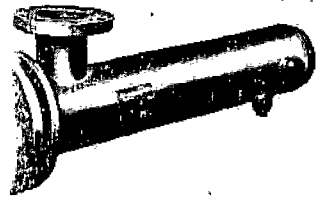
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heat exchangers



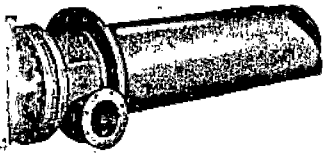
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"WU" Heat Exchanger
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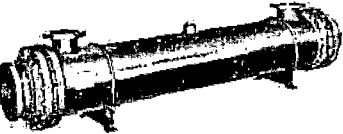


"17H" Tube Heat Exchanger
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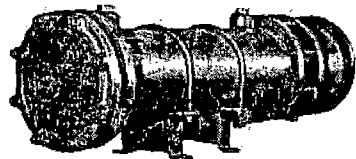
B&G "OF" Series (Straight Tube) Heat Exchangers
Ideal where heavy fouling fluids are inside tubes and light fouling fluids in the shell.



B&G "OC" Straight Tube Removable Tube Bundle
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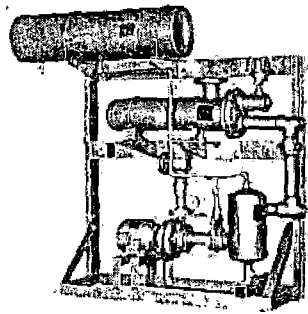
B&G "OE" Series Fixed-Tube Sheet with Expansion Joint
Straight tube heat exchangers have expansion joint of flanged and flued or bellows type construction.



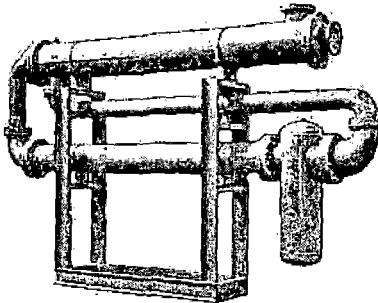
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Using cooling water, these units are adapted to cooling of gases entering tubes at 1000°F or lower.



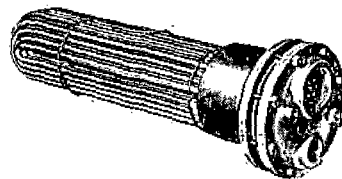
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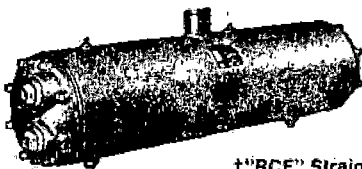
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†B&G Types "TCW," "TCS," and "TCY" Tank Heaters
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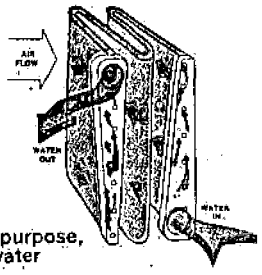
assistance on all these products. Service engineers are available from one of the over 80 TRANE Service Agencies throughout the nation.

For further information, contact your nearby TRANE sales office or write The TRANE Company, Commercial Air Conditioning Division, La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601.

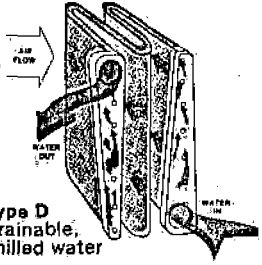
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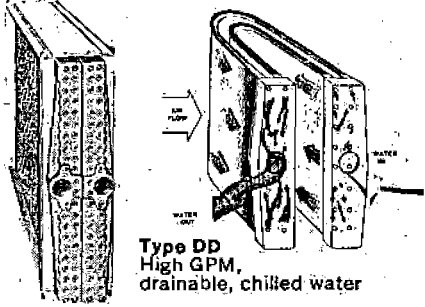
Circle 334 on Reader Service Card; For information on the complete line of Trane heating and air conditioning products see pages 183-208 in HPAC Info-dex



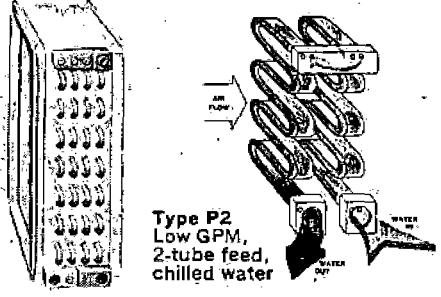
Type W
General purpose,
chilled water



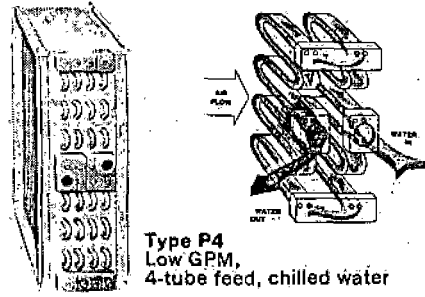
Type D
Drainable,
chilled water



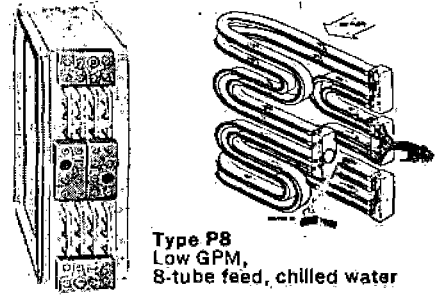
Type DD
High GPM,
drainable, chilled water



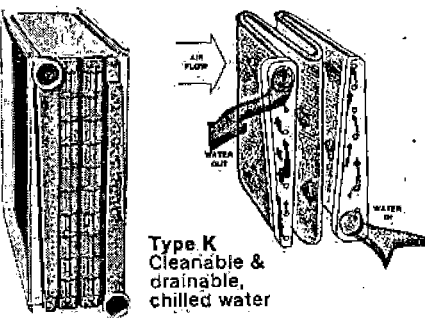
Type P2
Low GPM,
2-tube feed,
chilled water



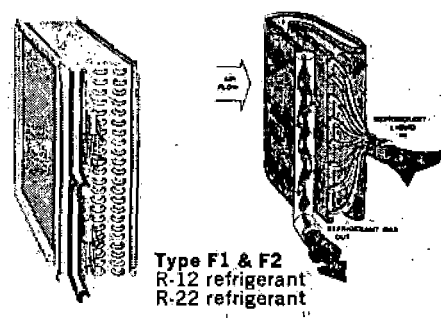
Type P4
Low GPM,
4-tube feed, chilled water



Type P8
Low GPM,
8-tube feed, chilled water



Type K
Cleanable &
drainable,
chilled water



Type F1 & F2
R-12 refrigerant
R-22 refrigerant

Heating

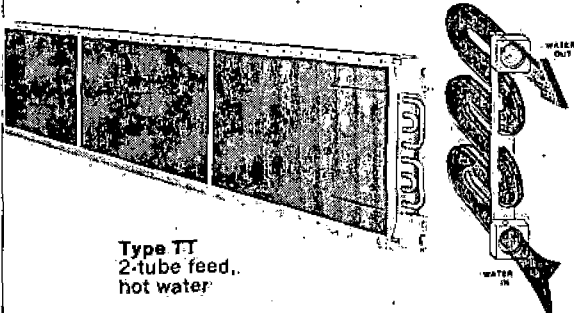
Trane's computerized coil selection program

A no-charge TRANE service, coil selections based on these computer programs can reduce initial or operating costs in built-up or central station systems.

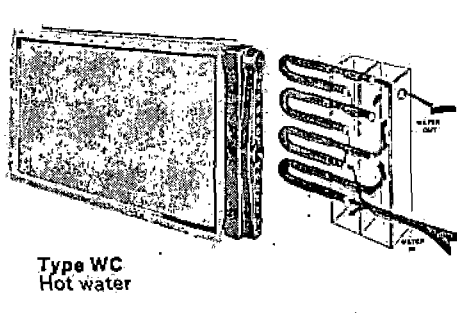
For example, for a typical chilled water cooling system, the computer selects ten different COIL/GPM combinations, ranging from few rows with high GPM to more rows with low GPM. Some selections will produce higher first cost and lower energy requirements, others offer lower first cost and higher energy consumption. With the data from a TRANE computerized coil

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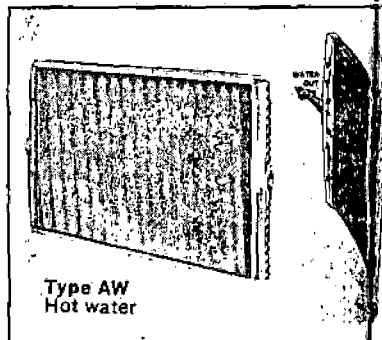
This service is as close as your local office. Once your performance specifications have been transmitted to our computer at La Crosse, coil selections are made and returned to you within 48 hours.



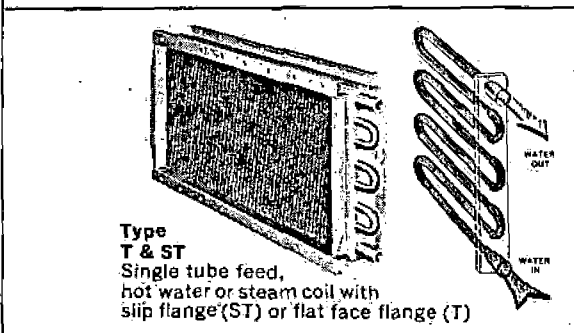
Type TT
2-tube feed,
hot water



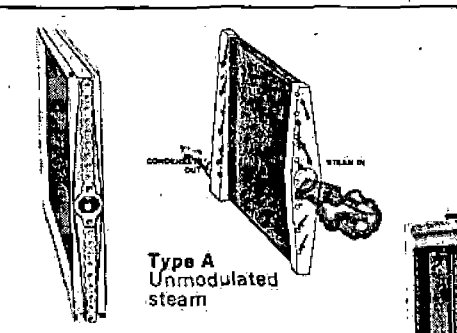
Type WC
Hot water



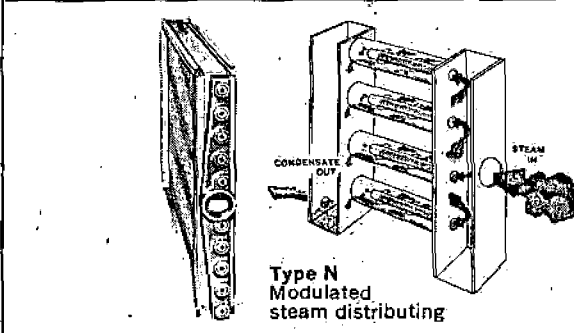
Type AW
Hot water



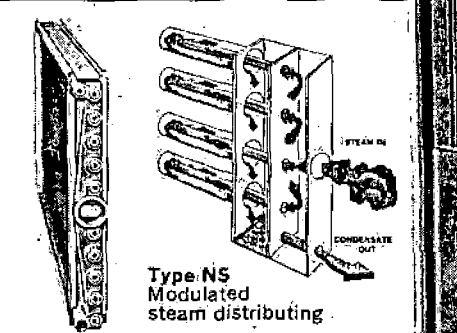
Type T & ST
Single tube feed,
hot water or steam coil with
slip flange (ST) or flat face flange (T)



Type A
Unmodulated
steam



Type N
Modulated
steam distributing



Type NS
Modulated
steam distributing



Condenser tube materials to withstand sea water

Sea water can pose complex corrosion problems when used as a cooling medium

By ALBERT I. CHO, PE, Director, Mechanical Engineering, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Chicago, Ill.

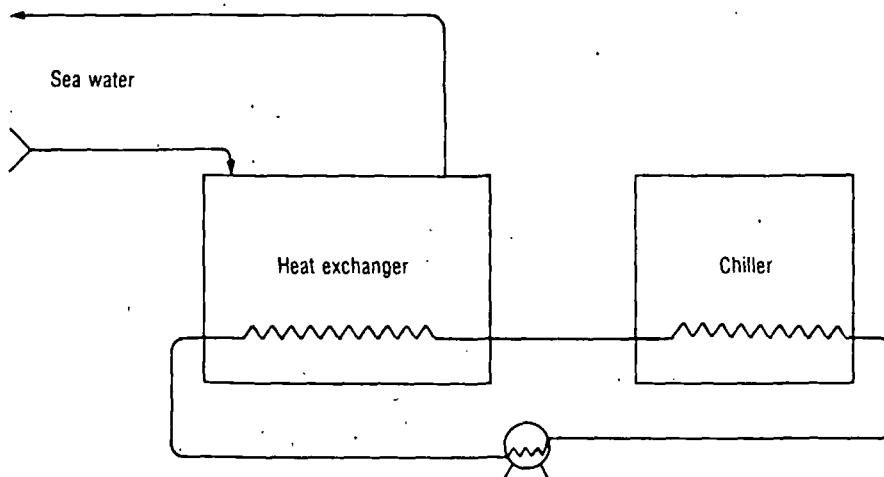
Several of our recent projects involved the use of sea water as the once-through cooling medium for condensers in large centrifugal water chillers in air conditioning systems. As a result, we evaluated various materials that would prevent and/or minimize corrosion of the tubes by sea water. Some of these materials and alternate methods of application are discussed in this article.

Plan 1

The simplest method of protecting the condenser tubes from sea water corrosion is to provide a heat exchanger in combination with a water chiller of standard construction (copper tubes). The heat exchanger would be fabricated from 90/10 cupro-nickel.

There are some disadvantages to this plan, however, and these are as follows:

- Chiller operation would be less efficient. There is a 6 to 10 deg F higher condenser water temperature loss from the supplemental heat exchanger. This increases energy consumption to approximately 1.3 KW per ton compared to 1.03 KW per ton for a system without a supplemental heat exchanger.
- Additional cost is a factor also. Secondary pumping power to transfer the cooling water from the heat exchanger to the chiller amounts to 0.03 KW per ton. In addition, the cost of the supplemental heat ex-



1 Plan 1—Centrifugal water chiller of standard construction with an intermediate heat exchanger installed in order to avoid direct contact of sea water with the unit's condenser tubes.

changer, secondary pumps, additional wiring and controls, and additional piping would be incurred.

• Finally, the plan requires more mechanical space. An additional 500 sq ft is needed to accommodate a 2000 ton unit.

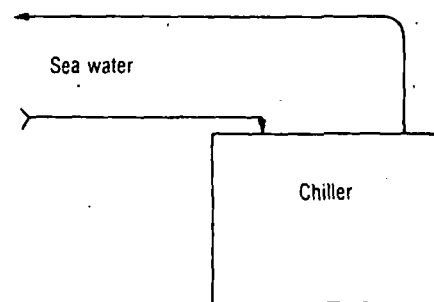
On the other side of the ledger, the plan has some good points also. These include:

- The positive isolation of the chiller from the sea water circuit would prevent corrosion of the tubes, and there would be no chiller downtime due to tube failure. If a spare heat exchanger is provided, the chiller can be switched over in the event the original one fails.
- If the heat exchanger fails, the chiller condenser would be contaminated with sea water, but the evaporator and compressors would

be kept free of sea water contamination.

Plan 2

A second method—the conven-



2 Centrifugal chiller with condenser tubes, tube sheets, and head boxes fabricated from cupro-nickel. Sea water is pumped directly through condenser. Automated butterfly valve isolates condenser from evaporator and compressor in the event of condenser failure.

Condenser tube materials to withstand sea water

tional and more practical method—is to eliminate the supplemental sea water heat exchanger and the secondary recirculating pumping circuit. The sea water would be pumped through strainers into the chiller condenser. In this plan, the tubes, tube sheets, and head boxes would be fabricated of cupro-nickel.

To prevent sea water from contaminating the evaporator and compressor in case of condenser failure, an automated butterfly valve, which would be controlled by pressure and a moisture sensor in the condenser, would be installed to isolate the condenser from the evaporator and compressor.

There are some disadvantages inherent in this plan also. These are as follows:

- The chiller must be specially fabricated. A longer lead time is needed, and chiller cost is higher. For a unit below 2000 tons, the lead time increases from 60 working days to 90 working days.

- If the condenser fails, damage to the evaporator and compressor is possible if the automated butterfly isolation valves should fail simultaneously.

- There would be shutdown and repair costs if the condenser tubes fail. The principal cause of tube failure would be sea water corrosion.

- Cupro-nickel has a slightly lower heat transfer coefficient. Efficiency is approximately 4 percent less for the same heat transfer area.

Some of the plan's advantages are as follows:

- No additional equipment and associated appurtenances are needed for secondary pumping.

- No additional energy is consumed by secondary pumping. Power consumption for the chiller would be in the range of 1.03 kw per ton-hour.

- Also, less mechanical space is required.

Plan 2A

A modification of this conventional installation is to provide tubes made of titanium (ASTM B-338, Grade 2) having a wall thickness of 0.028 in. The tube sheets and water boxes would be fabricated from monel.

Titanium has some disadvantages, however; these are:

- It has a higher first cost than either cupro-nickel or copper.

- Service people with experience on large titanium condenser tubes may be hard to find.

- Titanium also has a slightly lower heat transfer coefficient than either cupro-nickel or copper (wall thickness equal to 0.049 in.). Efficiency loss is approximately 12 percent more than a copper tube with the same heat transfer area. However, a common practice is to use 0.028 in. wall thickness with 30 percent more fin area to overcome the heat transfer deficiency.

On the plus side, Plan 2A offers the following advantages:

- No additional equipment is required for secondary pumping.

- And no additional energy is needed for secondary pumping. Power draw will be in the range of 1.03 kw per ton.

- Less mechanical space is needed.

Sea water composition

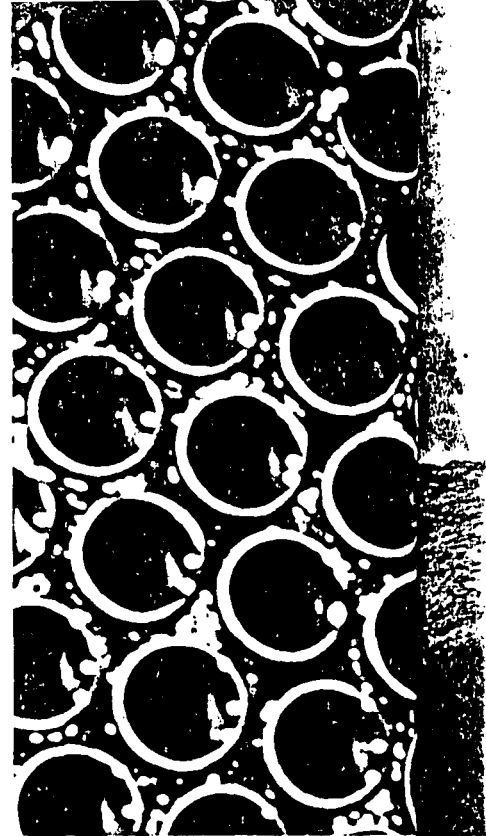
In both Plans 1 and 2 and the modified arrangement, Plan 2A, the composition of the sea water is an important factor. The average characteristic of sea water is approximately as shown in Table 1.

The composition of sea water in many harbor locations can show a maximum increase of approximately 10 percent in the values listed. Sea water can also show a decrease in these values, which can be caused by the discharge of surface runoff water and domestic sewage into the harbor. The action of tides and currents within the harbor can also affect the chemical physical characteristics of the sea water.

The economics and cost effectiveness of the three systems (Plans 1 and 2 and the modification of Plan 2) using sea water on a once-through, noncontact basis can be tabulated as shown in Table 2.

When comparing the first cost and service life, it seems from reviewing Table 2 that the use of titanium tubed condensers (as outlined in the modification plan) is an advantageous approach.

The discharge of domestic sew-



age and contaminated runoff into the harbor can create a serious corrosive condition that causes the production of two gases in the water. These gases are the result of the decomposition of the fouling organic matter. They are:

- Hydrogen sulfide (H_2S)—In sea water, it is very active in promoting pitting type corrosion of copper and cupro-nickel.

- Ammonia (NH_3)—It promotes general (uniform) corrosion of copper and cupro-nickel.

Any organic debris—even sea life—settling out of the sea water in a system can cause localized corrosion.

The application of chlorine (Cl_2) has been considered to chemically remove (by oxidation) any hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, and organic matter present in sea water that could contribute to corrosion. If the dosage of chlorine is greater than required by the chlorine demand of the sea water, the excess chlorine could have a deleterious effect on the condenser tubes of the chillers.

Application of a positive action condenser tube cleaning system may prevent deposits—organic and inorganic—on the tubes. Such a system uses a positive action of a brush passing through each tube periodically, or continuous, random recirculation of sponge rubber balls may be the cleaning medium. A sig-

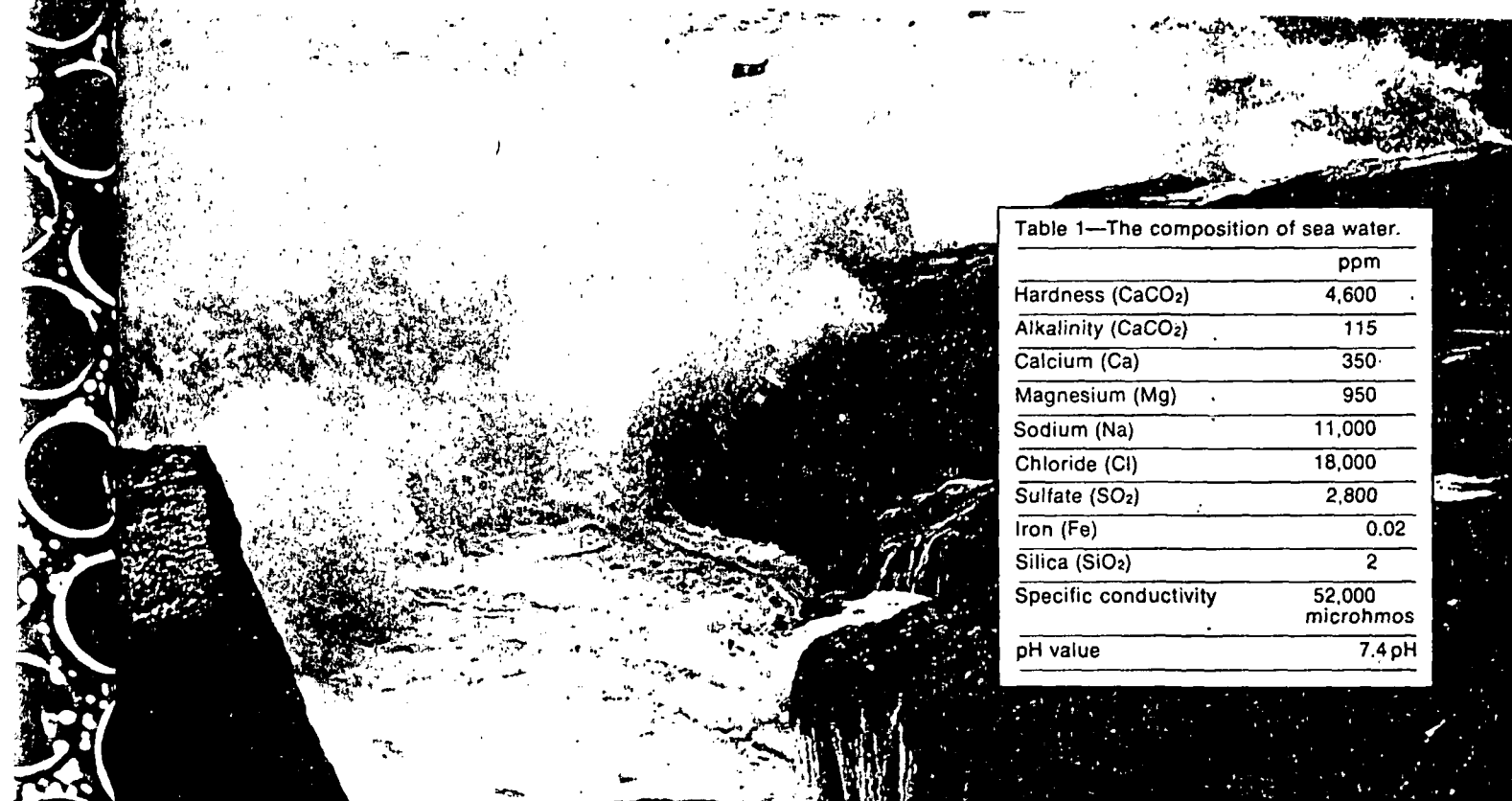


Table 1—The composition of sea water.

	ppm
Hardness (CaCO ₂)	4,600
Alkalinity (CaCO ₂)	115
Calcium (Ca)	350
Magnesium (Mg)	950
Sodium (Na)	11,000
Chloride (Cl)	18,000
Sulfate (SO ₂)	2,800
Iron (Fe)	0.02
Silica (SiO ₂)	2
Specific conductivity	52,000 microhmos
pH value	7.4 pH

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nificant benefit of these cleaning systems is that any debris is continually removed from the tube surfaces. This improves heat transfer substantially and reduces the fouling factor to the design level.

In making these corrosion studies, it is evident that we have departed from detailed measurements, facts, figures, etc. The causes of corrosion are not always readily or easily evaluated. Moreover, the causes of corrosion in different environments may not be related. It is not possible to reduce these various causes of corrosion to a series of chemical symbols or reactions or equations.

The causes of corrosion and the failure of condenser tubes by contact with sea water are very broad, and many times they are interrelated. Some causes of corrosion are chemical, some are physical, others are electrical, and still others are mechanical. To these various causes of corrosion, authorities have ascribed many examples of corrosion and failure of condenser tubes, such as: general attack, localized pitting (pinholes), stress cracking, fatigue cracking, intergranular cracking, electrolysis/galvanic action, crevice attack, cavitation effect, erosion attack, impingement effect, dealloying chemicals (ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, the presence/absence of oxy-

Some causes of sea water corrosion are chemical, some are physical, others are electrical, and still others are mechanical

gen, high or low pH values, etc.), vibration, split fins, scale/debris in tubes, velocity/temperature effects, non-homogeneity of the metal, presence/absence of a suitable uniform protective oxide film.

When any of the preceding causes of corrosion of condenser tubes by sea water is present or absent, the selection of the tubes best suited

should be carefully considered with attention to the life cycle cost of the equipment and the vulnerability against shutdown of the plant.

The author wishes to express his appreciation to Mr. E. T. Erickson, PE, for his courtesy and assistance in determining the effects of sea water on the various materials considered.

Table 2—Comparison of plans.

Plans	Chiller cost per ton of capacity, \$	Estimated tube life, years*
Standard copper tubes	135	1 to 6
Plan 1: water chiller of standard construction plus heat exchangers	185	10 to 20
Plan 2: Cupro-nickel tubes, tube sheets, and head boxes (supplemental sea water heat exchanger and the secondary recirculating pumping circuit are eliminated).	148	10 to 20
Plan 2A: Titanium tubes with monel water boxes and tube sheets.	180	Over 20

*Estimated life of tubes based on use of nonpolluted sea water



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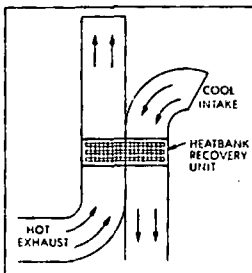
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ducting, and results in lower pressure drop. And their superior conductivity enables them to recover up to 700,000 of every million BTUs of exhaust heat.

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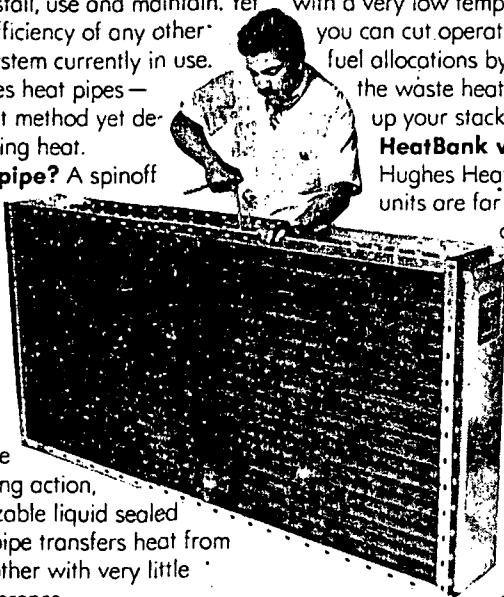
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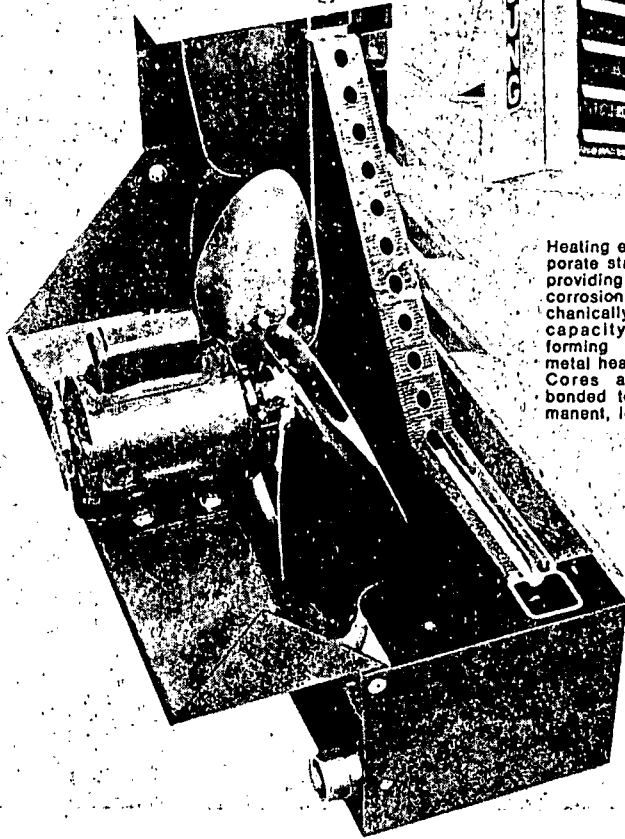
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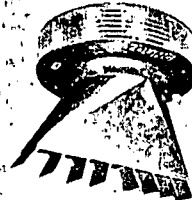


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Equipment developer

continued from page 140

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Panels for solar heating

Panels consist of two sheets of material that are bonded together and expanded areas to form channels through which fluids can be circulated for heat transfer purposes. Available in 34 by 96 in. — *Brass, Olin Corp.*

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Steam loader

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Enclosed air heaters

For use in industrial and commercial buildings, units comply with OSHA regulations. Burner and draft inducer have been relocated inside the frame. If necessary, the blower may be installed remotely. Units can be obtained as air heaters, makeup air heaters. Heaters can be equipped with oil, gas, or gas/oil burners in a range from 550,000 to 2 million Btuh. — *PowRmatic, Inc.*

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Programmable controller

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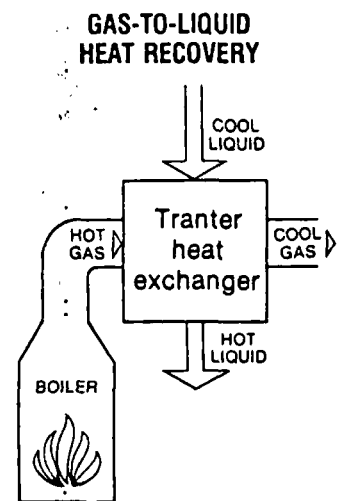
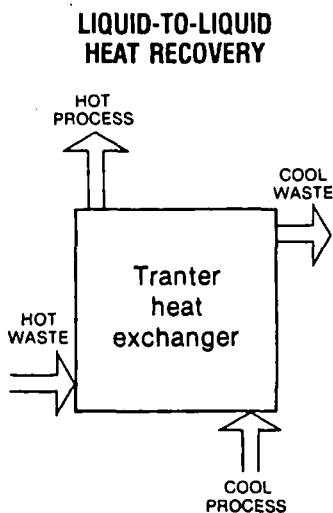
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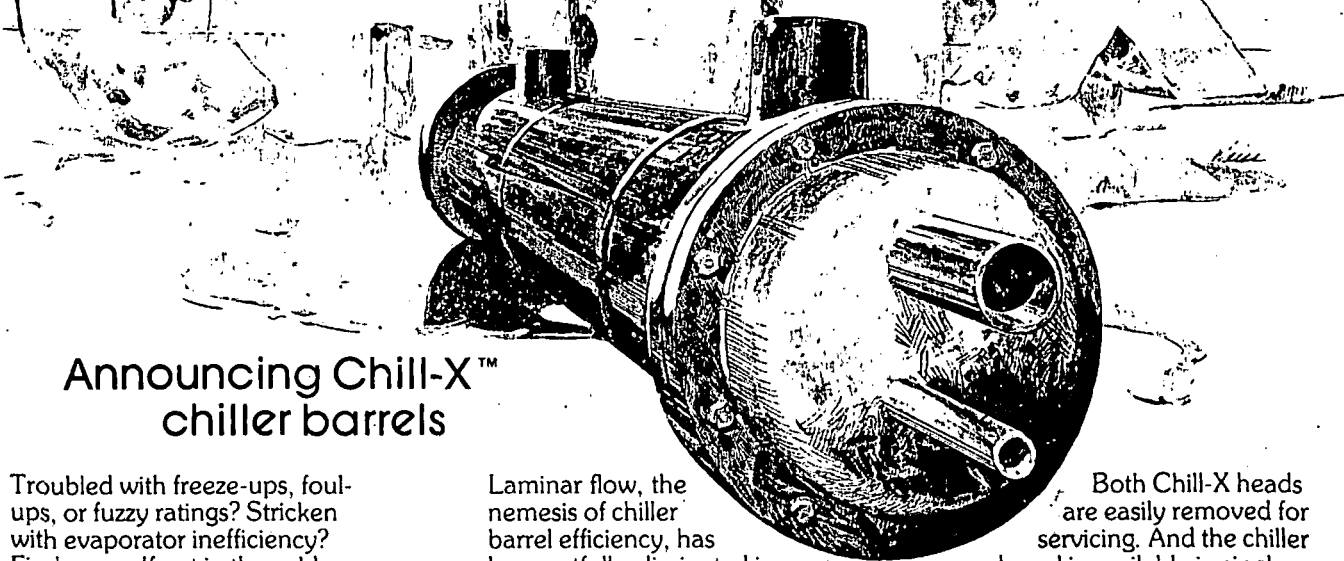
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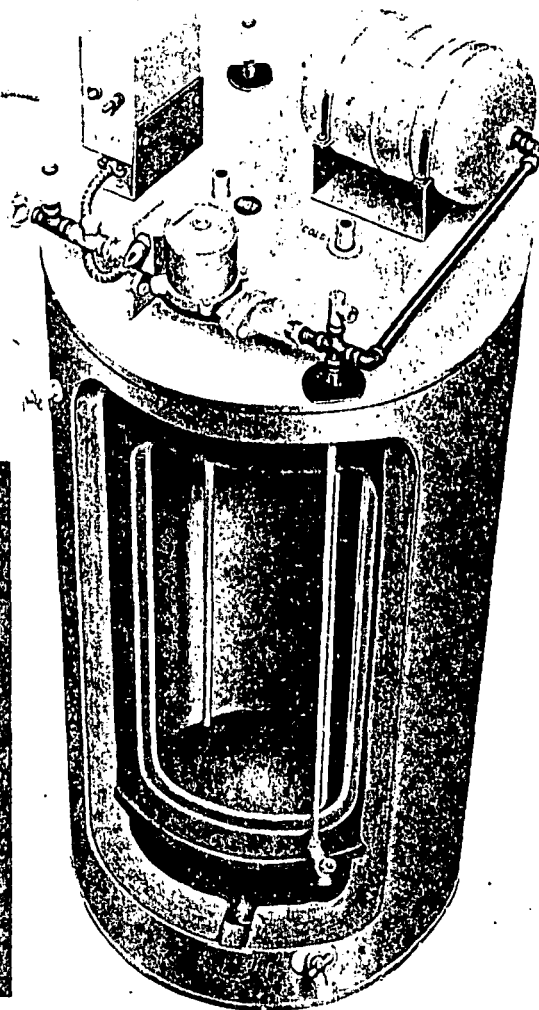
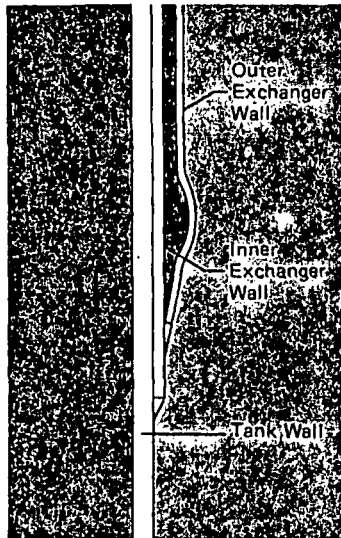
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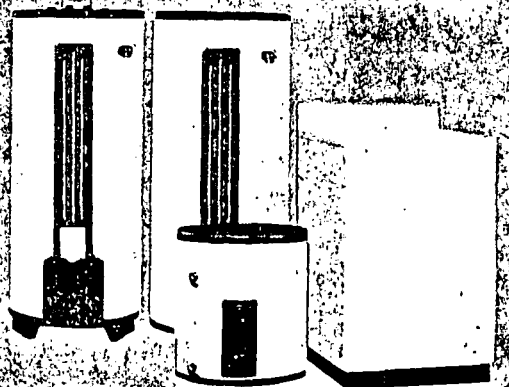
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