

AL-6XN[®] Alloy Fractional-Distillation Column Still Producing After 16 Years of Service

One of the nation's leading forest products companies, installed at their Georgia facility an AL-6XN alloy fractional-distillation column for separating tall oil, a by-product in the papermaking process, in October, 1989.

Measuring approximately 14 feet in diameter and 160 feet tall, the column, plus exchangers, packing, reboiler, piping, vapor lines, jacket piping and pumps, all have been constructed out of AL-6XN materials.

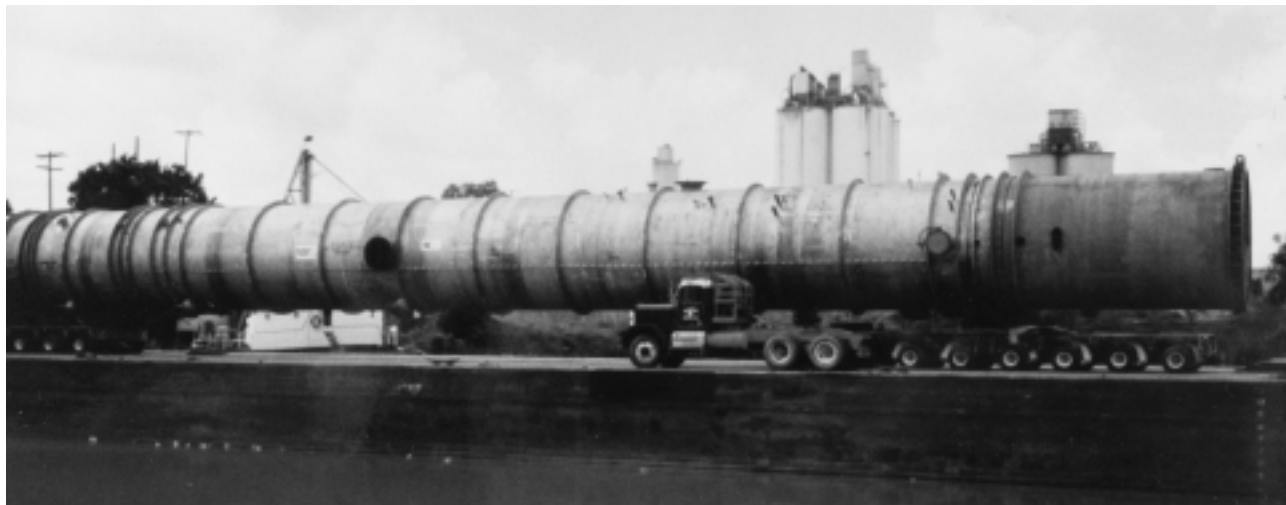
The column follows the Swiss type design, introduced in the late sixties. However, the unit is a modified system that utilizes both packing and trays. Using Dow therm[®] as the sole heating medium, nearly all the heat is recovered by the exchangers producing all the steam needed in the process. The system also increased yield, improves quality, and reduces pollution problems.

Because of AL-6XN, two additional weeks of production have been gained each year because of decreased maintenance inspection requirements. Previously, a similar tower made of a lesser stainless would routinely be taken out of service for repairs two weeks out of every six months, and after three years noticeable corrosion was found.

By comparison, the tower is now taken out of production for two weeks every twelve months. The tower continues to operate as of 2005 without any reported problems.

AL-6XN®

The column is packed with .005" AL-6XN alloy packing which was supplied by Koch Glitsch. A second tower was construction out of AL-6XN in 1993. This unit also remains in operation today. Fabrication of the column was by Allied Industries, Houston, Texas, with the exchangers supplied by Manning and Lewis, Union, New Jersey.



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