



## ■ FILL PLANT EQUIPMENT Medical Fill Racks

# When is the Right Time to Switch to a Medical Fill-Rack ?

Filling medical D & E cylinders from larger tanks is often referred to by fillers as a time consuming, labor intensive, unprofitable procedure for companies.

Fillers using medical fill racks to fill their medical cylinders are changing their stance on the profitability of filling medical D & E cylinders. Ranging in size from 20 to 100 tanks, the organized efficiency of a medical fill-rack system streamlines the filling process to half the time and space of traditional filling. This allows for greater output at a lower cost as well as giving fillers the ability to tend to other duties. The old filling method is labor intensive, whereas, the design of the medical fill-rack cuts the labor involved to a minimum.

A small investment for the long-term, a medical fill-rack is great for companies currently filling a low volume, who are looking to reduce cost to improve their sales margin and increase their growth potential. Oxygen cylinders are simply placed on the medical fill-rack and connected to the hoses. Fillers can choose to fill half a rack, while prepping or unloading the other half, or fill all tanks at the same time. The fill-rack is easy to unload, then reload, increasing

the number of cylinders filled in a far shorter amount of time; all in a tidy, compact space. Since the labor cost is so much less, companies can be more competitive with their prices, and time is freed up for workers to perform other tasks such as filling other compressed gases or moving inventory.

Medical fill-racks come in different sizes to fit both a company's current and potential filling needs. Single-sided fill-racks can fill up to 60 tanks at a time. Best for lower volume operations, the unique, space-saving design is on wheels and tucks up neatly against a wall, freeing up space for a productive work area that will accommodate the higher fill-volume achieved by the quicker process.

The dog-house style medical fill-rack is two-sided, also on wheels for ease of placement and movement, and, depending on the rack installed, able to fill 20 to 100 tanks at a time. Isolation valves on both the top and bottom of the fill rack allow for a fluid, continuous filling procedure by unloading and loading one half of the rack while the other is filling, and vice-versa, maximizing productivity.

Always keeping in mind growth and convenience, Ratermann Manufacturing further recommends using the optional FasTest quick-connects that make filling oxygen five times faster, making for an even more dramatic increase in productivity.

The medical fill-rack allows companies, both large and small, to expand their oxygen filling capabilities without disruption to their work flow. So, whether you are currently filling 10 or 1000 cylinders, now is always the best time to switch to a Ratermann Manufacturing fill-rack system.

**Optional quick connectors for faster turnaround of tanks on the filling rack**



*We interviewed AGP's Vice President of operations, Kevin Cronin and the fill plant manager, Jim Jiminez on their opinion of the medical fill rack and it's effects on their company:*

**Q: What was your old way of filling like?**

**A:** "Our old way was pretty standard. Our cylinders stood straight up so I was required to do a leak test to see if there was any liquid inside. My method of filling didn't allow me to use the quick connects like the fill rack does. It required a lot more time and strain because of the yoke hand-tights. Our old way was double the process. Now I can quickly load the tanks on the rack and connect them to the quick connects in less than half the time it took with the yoke hand-tights. I was limited to filling a max of 20 at a time before. It wasn't as neat and organized, filling oxygen felt more like a hassle. Now I have doubled my capacity to 40 and it's easy to fill [the tanks]."

## We Asked AGP Their Opinion...

**Q: When is the right time to switch to a medical fill rack, do you wish you switched sooner?**

**A:** "Honestly, anytime is the right time to switch but I do wish we switched sooner. The medical fill rack makes filling medical tanks really easy and it allows us to grow as a company."

**Q: How has the medical fill rack changed AGP's Productivity?**

**A:** "Productivity, that's it. We wanted something to help increase our productivity while growing rapidly. That's what the fill rack has done for us; we have doubled our productivity and efficiency using the same amount of space as before. We are growing so quickly we needed something to help with the process."

**Q: How has the medical Fill Rack helped AGP to continue to grow?**

**A:** "We use to spend a lot of time out here filling a small quantity [of medical tanks]. Now we are able to spend less time filling for medical but double the amount of tanks filled. As we continue to grow we can keep adding another load [of tanks] with minimum impact on our labor needs."



**JIM JIMINEZ, Plant Manager of American Gas Products**

## We Asked AGP...

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**Q:** What does the medical fill rack save you?

**A:** "It cuts all of the time and work in half. We are saving money and saving time. We use to spend a lot of time over here filling. Now we can put 40 [tanks] on [the fill rack] and there's no hassle, we can also go work on other things with the time saved."

**Q:** How much time does the medical fill rack save you on average?

**A:** The medical fill rack probably cuts the time in half or maybe even 75% less time to fill oxygen. Filling oxygen use to be a pain but now there's a process. We put the amount of tanks we need filled on the fill rack, hook them up and then let them fill we are now able to work on something else while they are filling.

**Q:** What do you do with the time you save filling?

**A:** "We have more time to work on compressed gases and mixed gases. Using the medical fill rack is half the amount of work so now we have more time to spend in other areas. Also, without the extra distractions that come with oxygen filling we are able to spend more attention on details like cylinder inspections and proper labeling."



**Q:** You mentioned spit test earlier, has the inverted design helped with that?

**A:** "Well, everything is inverted so we are not required to do a spit test on the cylinders. When you fill them flat or standing up you are required to do a spit test to see if any liquid comes out of them."

**Q:** You are now able to use the quick fills connectors with the inverted design, correct?

**A:** "Yes, that is another advantage of the Inverted design. We are also able to get rid of the yoke hand-tights and instead use the quick fills. You can't use the quick fills if you fill with the tanks standing up. The quick fills are so much easier to use, it's been great."

**Q:** What about the future of AGP and medical filling?

**A:** "That's the thing, now we have this fill rack that allows us to fill as much as we want to. Before we filled maybe 10 tanks a day, now we have the ability to go out and get the medical oxygen business without it disrupting our productivity. So that is our next goal, filling up the medical fill rack." —Kevin Cronin

**Q:** Would you ever go back to your old way of filling?

**A:** "No way! This thing is so great I couldn't go back. It saves us so much time, its less work, and it allows us to work on other things. So no, I could never go back."

*Written by Marie Ratermann, Marketing Department, Ratermann Manufacturing, Inc.*

**For more information on Medical Fill Racks, please contact [www.rmiororder.com](http://www.rmiororder.com) or [sales@rmimfg.com](mailto:sales@rmimfg.com).**



One Sided – 20 Cylinder Fill Rack



Two Sided (Dog House Style) – 100 Cylinder Fill Rack