

Should I Hire or Purchase Gas Detectors?

Jason Wright, Account Manager, Industrial Scientific Corporation
Email: jwright@indsci.com.

When I married my wife, I also became a proud owner of a swimming pool. So you would think that I would be happy to see the summer months approaching, right? Wrong. It's actually quite the contrary. So far, it's been the same story every year. It starts with uncovering the pool, and then it quickly goes downhill from there. The first step is to drain the smelly, stagnant, tadpole-filled water off the winter cover. And every year, the same thing seems to happen: There is a minuscule tear or hole in the cover that I cannot see. I place the water pump onto the cover and as I am waiting for the water to drain, I notice the water level gets to a certain point but never gets any lower. Hmm....

It is then that I realise the good water, which is underneath the cover, is now being sucked through the pump and sent through the waste line. Nice. After I wrestle with the — let's call it the "heavier than you think because it still has smelly, stagnant, tadpole-filled water on it" winter cover — I finally get it pulled to one side of the pool and somehow remove it. By this time, I am usually covered in smelly, stagnant, tadpole-filled water. After removing the smelly

tadpoles from my ears, it's time to assess the water level in the pool and determine how many loads of water I will need to purchase from the local fire department. Next, it's time to buy chemicals and various pool supplies. After turning on the pump and praying that no leaks spring up, it's now time to vacuum the pool. "Darn. The vacuum is broken!" Back to the pool supply store I go. Granted, I am a newer pool owner and do not have a vast knowledge about caring for a swimming pool. I'm sure I will learn more about it in time, but I don't think I will ever become an expert. My time spent taking care of the pool is limited since I live in an area with a cold climate many months out of the year. And after all of that, usually I don't end up having much time to sink into it anyway.

I would surely love to be able to hire a swimming pool, but now I'm stuck owning one. When it comes to gas detection equipment, however, you do have a choice. Understandably, companies that have a need for gas



monitors on site for everyday use should participate in a "total package" Gas Detection as a Service solution. But what about those instances when your need for the gas detection equipment lasts only a few days or a couple of months? In this case, it is more economical to hire gas monitors than to buy them. A process shutdown at a plant is a common event in which hiring gas detectors would be ideal. This could be a turnaround at a refinery, a shutdown at a steel mill, or an outage at a power plant. During these processes, more or different types of gas monitors often are needed by the maintenance crew of that company or for use by the contractors who will be coming on site to do the work.

Another case in which hiring gas detection equipment makes better sense is during a new process or experiment. For instance, an industrial hygienist wants to conduct a test, but the particular gas of concern is not within the plant's normal array of sensors. Why purchase a gas monitor for this short-term project and pay all of the maintenance costs that go along with it when you can hire for a fraction of the cost of ownership? In the unfortunate event of an accident or emergency, fire and hazmat crews are not always equipped with gas detectors that include the exotic gas sensors, such as chlorine, ammonia, and hydrogen chloride. It would be very costly to own and maintain a monitor with these sensors installed due to the price of the sensors and calibration gas associated with the exotic gases.

In addition to cost savings, an advantage to hiring over purchasing gas detectors is that it enables more accurate budgeting for projects. This is because the hire costs are known ahead of time. If a piece of equipment is purchased and owned, all of the other costs associated with maintaining the units over time are unknown and unaccounted for. When the job is done and the hire units are sent back, the maintenance and upkeep costs are transferred back to the company that owns the equipment. Typically, gas detection equipment hire companies will absorb the normal costs associated with wear and tear, including sensor replacements, filters, faceplates, and pumps. These costs are not passed on to the customer. Some will even go so far as to send out replacement monitors the same day they are needed for hire monitors that go down while in service.

In summary, hiring gas detectors is a great option for applications that require short-term use of gas detection equipment. These could be instances where more equipment is needed to cover additional workers due to a turnaround, shutdown, or outage. There may be a need for a different type of gas monitor with sensors that are not typically used on a day-to-day basis. In an emergency when gas monitors are needed quickly, hiring could be a sensible option.

So don't be a victim of smelly, stagnant, tadpole-filled water abuse! Contact the gas detection experts and see whether hiring gas detectors is right for you.

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