

# Supply-chain woes restricting the availability of valve parts, access to valve repairs

A conversation with Aaron Florek, executive director, Millennium Power Services

“Material shortages is the number-one issue the industry is facing today,” says Millennium Power Services’ Aaron Florek. “Generally speaking, the raw materials needed for valve parts are either out of stock, have incredibly long lead times, or are simply unavailable. But this is not the case at Millennium: We have the resources to keep your valve projects moving forward without the challenges others may face.”

The industry always has lived with the necessary evil of long lead times for OEM parts; it has become “par for the course” in plant operations. However, when the already-long lead times are now twice as long, or longer, because OEMs are waiting on materials and parts, then you’re in real trouble if you don’t have an alternative.

“Almost all OEM parts you order for your equipment are manufactured overseas. That means they’re facing universal supply-chain issues,” Florek says. “If you need an OEM part fast, you might be out of luck these days. In some cases, you can’t even get the part at all.”

What can powerplant managers do when it seems OEM parts will be unavailable for the foreseeable future? Florek’s answer: Align with a domestic supplier having the capability to make the parts required. “That’s our business model,” he continues.

“Millennium Power Services has never been more relevant than it is today. The supply-chain issues we’re seeing only further illustrate the need for your plant to have a domestic, responsive valve manufacturer on call at all times.” Recall that Millennium is an industrial-valve service provider serving the entire US from its shops in Massachusetts, Maine, and Virginia. All of the company’s valve parts are manufactured at these facilities.

Millennium also has the flexibility to refer to an unlimited number of vendors to get what customers require. Overseas OEM providers typically are stuck with one source—which is precisely why they’re facing huge delays in their manufacturing.

“We continue to meet, or exceed, our customers’ requests—including emergencies, which seem to occur almost every week now. We are just as responsive today as we were pre-Covid, and we continue to grow every year.”

One of the greatest advantages of a valve repair shop equipped with machining facilities is that it allows Millennium to think “outside the box.” If one material is unavailable, we can discuss alternatives with our clients to come up with quick solution—despite shortages. “Our materials are sourced domestically,” Florek reminds. “We get them from the same people we’ve always gotten them from. They are not affected by the severe supply-chain issues plaguing overseas manufacturers.”

“Beyond that, we have one of the industry’s largest inventories of valve parts. Plus, we can manufacture most parts in just a few days. Remember, too, we usually can repair your valves in a fraction of the time it takes to get new ones—or parts—from the OEM. Repairs typically are



less expensive and faster, so it’s often a win-win situation.”

“We can repair, refurbish, and manufacture parts for pretty much any valve,” Florek continues. “We use a state-of-the-art 3D scanner and conduct other analyses to understand the materials used in a part, the amount of wear on that part, and provide root-cause analysis with recommendations for improvements. We aren’t there to just do a repair or replacement; we can rethink the component and application from the ground up.”

Florek went on to say another offering that sets Millennium apart from other service providers is its TrimKit program, which helps determine whether the company should manufacture or refurbish your valve parts. All components required for a particular job—refurbished or new—are shipped to the job site in a protective case. Project complete, the used parts are put back in the shipping case and sent to Millennium.

“Our customers can come to us for everything they need,” says Florek. “They don’t have to outsource their parts from 10 different suppliers. We are their single-source vendor.”

## What our customers have told us:

■ **Maintenance supervisor.** “We’ve been using Millennium’s services onsite for close to 10 years. They do valve work, safety-valve testing, and safety-valve overhauls, and their valve-parts turnaround is extraordinary. If you need something in a pinch, they won’t leave you hanging and you’ll never be the one waiting on them.”

This client, which also uses Millennium’s TrimKit program, added: “TrimKit has everything you need and it’s all labeled. It’s easy to store, move around, and hand over to contractors. With the TrimKit, you have everything needed to repair the valve.”

■ **Maintenance manager.** We throw almost everything we can at Millennium and the company has yet to fail us. “They reverse engineer our parts, provide TrimKits, safety valves, control valves; the list could go on and on. The Millennium team understands valves and it gives us peace of mind knowing we have the best people on valve repairs. On our last outage, we found problems with our CCI valves. Millennium took the valves to their shop and repaired them in a tenth of the time it would have taken the manufacturer to help us.”

■ **O&M manager** credits Millennium with the creation of his plant’s maintenance program. “We overhaul three or four valves per unit annually. TrimKit assures our valves always are in working order. The biggest benefit of the company’s parts program is that it takes the pressure off of us. Anything you need, they either have a replacement in inventory or will quickly repair the one in service and bring it back to the plant.”

**Wrapping up,** Florek suggests that perhaps the best way to combat shortages is to simply shorten the supply chain—which is what Millennium Power Services is doing by bringing what you need closer to home. Plus, it provides precision and flexibility to give you repair options even when you feel your hands are tied.