

POWER SOLUTIONS

CASE STUDY



WILDLIFE WORLD ZOO AND AQUARIUM

Location

Phoenix, Arizona

Market

Entertainment

Unique Obstacle

Provide backup power in the event of an outage to ensure the zoo's animals can survive.

Units

3 X 500 kW MPS

Solution

Generac MPS system to allow for future expansion.

Contact

Readers who may have similar application challenges and would like to discuss this success are invited to call 1-844-ASK-GNRC (1-844-275-4672).

Fishing for Power: Keeping the Wildlife World Zoo and Aquarium Afloat

Located along the western edge of the Phoenix metropolitan area in Litchfield Park, Arizona, the Wildlife World Zoo first opened its doors in 1984. Since its opening, the zoo has received accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), and joined the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) in 2004. With the opening of the Aquarium, Wildlife World has solidified its position as home to Arizona's largest collection of exotic animals with over 3,000 animals representing nearly 600 species and is the only public aquarium located between New Mexico and California.

The campus-like design features approximately 75 indoor exhibits including fish, mammals, birds, invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles located in three recently completed buildings, each with a different theme. Approximately 400,000 people, including some 75,000 students, visit annually.

In 2008 the aquarium went through a complete renovation and today features such creatures as black tip reef sharks, black-footed penguins, eels, stingrays, seahorses, barracuda, jellyfish and Nile and dwarf crocodiles; nearly 150 new aquatic and semi-aquatic species in all. The total volume of display tanks, not including miles of plumbing and life support, several new water features, and a log flume ride,

contain approximately 180,000 gallons of water.

Included in the aquarium's improvements was the addition of the Tiburón Aquarium Restaurant and Flamingo Lounge, which features unparalleled views of sharks swimming right past the tables. From every seat in the main dining room, customers can view some of the ocean's top predators through two massive acrylic panels that span the 60,000 gallon tank. The Flamingo Lounge overlooks a new water feature with dozens of graceful Caribbean flamingos.

So how does the zoo ensure that its newest sea faring additions remain safe in the event of an outage? This was the key concern that Zoo Director and Owner Mickey Ollson was faced with during the expansion of the aquarium. "With the addition of numerous species of both salt and freshwater fish, we needed to make sure that if an outage occurs, the animals would be able to survive. Without the use of backup power, the fish could die within 20 minutes of an outage and that is a chance that we are just not willing to take."

Once the aquarium expansion was underway, Mickey and his team began researching standby power options. In addition to a company that had a competitive price, good reputation and a

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dealer who was in close proximity to the zoo, they were also looking for a system that would be able to grow with them.

“That’s why we made the decision to install Generac® Power System’s Modular Power System (MPS). With Generac’s MPS system, I am confident that we are fully protected in the event of an outage. This is just the first phase of the aquarium,” says Ollsen. “We have another 95,000 square feet of zoning approved so as long as there is an interest in this exhibit, we’ll keep adding onto it for the next 10 years. It’s for this reason that we were in need of a standby system that would be able to grow with us and didn’t force us to add on another system that didn’t match the original.”

During the zoo’s quest for the best standby system, Ollsen was introduced to Don Leher, industrial sales manager at Gen-Tech, a Generac dealer located in Glendale, Arizona.

“Having been in business since 1990, we were very familiar with the zoo and their needs,” says Leher. “Since the zoo is located in a more rural area on the outskirts

of Phoenix, we understand their demand for a reliable system and that’s why we presented them with the Generac MPS. This is a system that is reliable, priced accordingly and will be able to grow with the aquarium’s expansion over the years. Other standby systems don’t offer that option and I think that’s what made Generac stand out.”

Gen-Tech installed three Generac MPS 500 kW units in an enclosed block wall directly behind the main building with three transfer switches (600, 1,000 and 1,200 amp). The results so far have been life saving to say the least.

“We have had at least one outage since installing the MPS system,” says Ollsen. “Generac’s generators worked flawlessly and the animals were all safe. The generators turned right on without delay and remained on until power was restored. Gen-Tech comes by every so often to make sure everything is running smoothly and so far, we haven’t had one issue. The animals are all happy, healthy and best of all, protected.”

