



Times-Gazette photo/Tom E. Puskar Anthony Mosely stands next to Keen Pumps sewage lift station for the Panama Canal expansion.

## **KEEN PUMP Company Sending Sewer Lift Stations to Panama Canal**

By Dan Kubacki T-G Staff Writer Published: December 23, 2014 4:00 AM

An Ashland company is making final preparations to complete a job linked to the expansion of the Panama Canal.

Keen Pump Company was awarded a contract to construct eight sewage lift stations that will be installed in the residential communities that house the workers in the canal expansion project, which is expected to be completed by 2016. The expansion will increase the size of the Panama Canal and allow for bigger and faster ships to travel through the waterway and boost international sea trade.

At Keen, workers are finishing the last touches on the lift stations so they can be sent to Panama in January. Keen received the eight dark green basins from AK Industries in Plymouth, Indiana, and built the mooring inside the basins that will house the pipes, which are 5 feet in diameter and 16 feet deep. The eight pipes have already been built and packaged and will be shipped separately to Panama.

Keen employee Anthony Mosley opened one of the basins and said the total assembly of the moorings could take about a whole day.

"A lot of the parts need to be fabricated," Mosley said. "In a perfect situation, if I had everything to assemble, I could have it done in a day."

When asked what the hardest part of the assembly job was, Mosley pointed to the stainless steel piping inside the basin. "Basically everything has to be perfect to fit together," Mosley said.

Keen got the Panama job after being contacted by a Canadian distributor a year and a half ago. Keen started in Lexington in 2004 and has been located at the plant on U.S. 250 East near Ohio 89 for the past four years.

Marketing manager Steve Etzel said Keen has several worldwide projects besides the Panama Canal job, including in Poland, Mexico and the Caribbean.

"We're not totally worldwide yet, but we do have spots where we have some good distribution that likes our product," Etzel said. "Generally, we supply product to the U.S., but we don't limit ourselves, either. So if we hear of projects like this, we know we can supply the need."

Etzel also said that in the canal expansion, Keen is contributing to a project that will have long-term global impact.

"In a nutshell, widening these locks is going to help get larger and faster ships through," Etzel said. "Because of that, they're going to be able to get more product to the ports, not only helping this country but other countries. It's just a total economic impact globally that Keen Pump is a small part of."

Keen sales consultant Tom Pakes said that he thinks the local community will be "surprised" by the reach Keen will have with the Panama Canal job. Plus, each large basin will have "Keen Pump Company" and "Ashland, Ohio" stenciled on it.

"It will just be a tremendous input with the people and workers, and people they're bringing in," Pakes said. "This could be a tremendous facility for housing and all the collections system and the water system. I can't wait to see the final pictures of where everything is."

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