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Welded vs Bolted Tanks

For Over 40 Years, D&R Tank has been providing high quality storage solutions to New Mexico and the Southwest. No project is too big or too small!

When choosing a longterm asset for the the health and welfare of the community such as a potable water storage tank, it is important to carefully consider all criteria. This criteria not only includes capital cost, but more importantly total lifetime costs which include repairs, maintenance, and even replacement. It is also important to consider if the asset installed can be readily and quickly repaired by local resources if an issue occurs.

LIFETIME COSTS

A well maintained welded steel tank can last over 100 years as opposed to a bolted steel tank which may only last about 30 years. This is because a welded steel can be re-coated approximately every 25 to 30 years in the field and any issues can be easily welded. Whereas a bolted tank has a glass fused coating that can not be easily repaired on-site. This generally leads to full-scale panel replacement or even costly tank replacement. Therefore, a lifetime cost comparison between a welded steel tank and bolted tank should include one to two tank replacements of the bolted tank in the same lifetime as a welded tank. A bolted tank would be considered temporary and a reasonable choice for a project lasting 30 years or less; whereas, a welded steel tank is the right choice for a tank meant to serve the community for many decades.

EASE OF REPAIR

In the event of an issue with your tank (i.e., bullet holes) you want a local company to be able to quickly respond and address the issue to minimize tank down time and repair costs. Welded steel tanks can easily be repaired by qualified local resources. Bolted steel tanks require specialized and expensive out of state teams to mobilize for repairs. How quickly can these teams mobilize?

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POTENTIAL FOR LEAKS

Would you buy a water tank with thousands of holes in it? Bolted steel tanks come with thousands of bolt holes that are sealed up with caulking. This caulking degrades over time ultimately leading to leaks. Whereas, welded steel tanks are seal welded for zero leaks. AWWA even allows for an "acceptable" amount of leakage from a bolted tank. Is any amount of water waste acceptable in a desert climate experiencing drought?!

CUSTOMIZATION

Bolted tanks are pre-fabricated and standardized and only tend to come in certain sizes determined by the manufacturer. In addition, there may be limitations on customizing tank features. In contrast, each welded steel tank is a custom project with dimensions and features determined by the Owner. We design the tank to fit your needs.

SAFETY

Welded steel tanks are safe to store water, petroleum products, and many chemicals due to their integrity and more leak resistant construction. In addition, the integrity of welded steel tanks lend itself to sanitary protection of potable water which helps communities ensure public health and welfare.

Attribute	Welded Steel	Bolted Steel
Life Expectancy	100+ Years	30 Years
Minimum Shell Thickness	3/16"	1/8"
Lowest Capital Cost	Size Dependent	
Lowest Lifetime Cost	X	
Most Durable	X	
Most Leak Resistant	X	
Most Easily Repaired	X	
Safest	X	
Most Customizable	X	