



BATTLE

A BATTLE OF THE ELEMENTS

AMS CASE STUDY

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Integrated Fire Protection takes on storm at Atlanta Motor Speedway



In what would total a whopping \$40 million project, Atlanta Motor Speedway knew it had to act fast in hiring construction and installation teams to have the speedway ready for the Bass Pro Shops MBNA 500 NASCAR NEXTEL Cup series race in two months before 125,000 fans and patrons descended upon the speedway.

It took only a matter of seconds to make its mark, but the devastating aftermath of July's 2005 Tropical Storm Cindy at Atlanta Motor Speedway (AMS) would last a while – or would it?

“We received a call in July asking if our team would carry the responsibility of repairing the fire sprinkler system, especially in the hospitality suites and I thought, piece of cake,” recalls Integrated Fire Protection (IFP) President John Bennett.

“Then they dropped the catch. We needed to have this done in time for the Bass Pro Shops MBNA 500, which was only eight weeks away,” said Bennett.

With more than 125,000 fans flocking to the race each year, IFP knew it was crucial to get things done quickly, and get them done right the first time.

Of course, the fans aren't the only ones who get fired up about the 325-lap race around the 1.54-mile oval track. More than fifty drivers attempted to qualify this year alone, with only 43 making the final cut.

Showing his enthusiasm best, perhaps, was Carl Edwards with a set of his signature backflips alongside other high-ranking drivers including Jeff Gordon, Mark Martin, Tony Stewart and Dale Earnhardt, Jr., to name a few.

In keeping with the enthusiasm and with a record-breaking time frame, Bennett and his team of certified inspectors and technicians rose to the challenge of keeping excited fans and drivers safe and protected. IFP joined more than 97 additional contractors working on all aspects of the restoration. AMS had nearly 430 workers on hand each day, generating more than 350,000 man hours.

Realizing the sense of urgency, IFP was able to re-orchestrate other client demands and allocate resources to AMS. For three weeks, IFP dedicated 16-hour work days to gain momentum and leeway on the project.

It would take dovetailing timelines and bi-weekly meetings with 75-100 other workers ranging from insurance companies to general contractors to successfully coordinate tasks and deadlines.

"Fortunately, for what could have very easily been a challenge to wait on others, everyone pulled their weight and worked well together," commented Bennett.

IFP had more than a dozen inspectors and technicians reporting on the project, the majority with certifications from the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies (NICET) and the National Association of Fire Equipment Dealers (NAFED).

Together, they were the IFP crew that was able to install thousands of feet of new pipe and more than 1,000 sprinkler heads, fire extinguishers and cabinets to cover the Earnhardt, Champions, Petty and East Turn hospitality suites (pictured below).



Portions of entire ceilings crashed down, affecting the internal fire protection structure even further.

“There’s a reason AMS asked us to do this—we’ve provided our services for the last two years and have delivered on-time quality work,” Bennett said.

The equipment used included a new fire pump capable of distributing 1500 gallons of water per minute through a completely automated fire sprinkler system. IFP’s equipment also included a unique bar coding system which uses web-based reporting technology providing secure and encrypted online access 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including exact pin-point locations of where the fire equipment devices are strategically positioned.

“We take the business of fire and life safety seriously. Our commitment is protection, compliance, and complete satisfaction,” said Bennett.



IFP created a sense of design and unity and brought the AMS fire safety system to a higher standard in 120 hospitality suites.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), because fire sprinkler systems respond so quickly, they can drastically reduce the heat, flames and smoke produced in a fire, reducing casualties and damage in a fire. On average, loss is reduced up to 65 percent. In fact, the NFPA has no record of a fire killing more than two people in a public assembly, educational, or institutional building where sprinkler systems were working properly.

Aside from providing safety, IFP also brought a greater scale of continuity to all 120 suites.

“While the speedway had undergone hospitality suite upgrades and expansions over the years, its fire protection systems were not as up-to-date in fire protection as they could be,” explained Bennett. “Not only that, but each building had a different system and design.”

IFP worked closely with the chief inspector of Henry County, adhering to the NFPA codes and standards as well as with FM Global Insurance, allowing IFP to better serve the speedway.

Vice President of Events at AMS Brandon Hutchinson noticed the collective efforts immediately. “The scope of work was a big job to tackle, but IFP jumped on board quickly and did a fantastic job in managing the process to get the work done before the race.”

Hutchinson noted that he was impressed with the quality and level of service and noted the collaborative efforts of the team as “a positive experience.”



Integrated Fire Protection President John Bennett (left) and specialist Jason Johns (right) review a job well done after the Atlanta Motor Speedway tropical storm renovations.

He added, "Throughout the reconstruction process, IFP stayed ahead of the race to finish the work, and did a great job."

"Prior to more than 125,000 Atlanta Motor Speedway fans hitting the stands, suites and track, IFP was able to successfully get the job done, and do it well," said IFP Director of Sales and Operations Jason Johns.

With credentials including Nestle Purina PetCare, Anheuser Busch, the Georgia Dome and Fulton County Schools behind the firm, the comments that came from the Atlanta Motor Speedway weren't surprising.

Rentenbach Constructors Vice President of Operations Tony Pettit states, "Integrated has performed exceptionally well on this project, meeting deadlines and exceeding our expectations; I couldn't be more pleased." Jim Guess, project designer with Speedway Motorsports, Inc. had similar thoughts. "We trust their work and their ability to finish the job in the allotted time frame. IFP is a good company," he said.

But aside from the acclaim and testimonials, John Bennett thinks the bottom line, which is also the company's philosophy, is that "we take great pride in our service and really do care about our customers."

Of course, speedway fans may never notice the new upgrades above their heads, or even begin to think about how much safer they are, or realize the great lengths companies such as IFP took in keeping them safe.

However, that may be just the point.



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<http://www.integratedfireprotection.com>