
Question 40: What are your best practices when crimping pigtails on a hydrogen plant? Are there any metallurgical limitations?

Pat Bernhagen (Foster Wheeler USA Corporation- Fired Heater Division)

Foster Wheeler Fired Heater Division- Most owners take the unit down and pinch off the top and the bottom pigtail with a double crimping device and physically separate the pigtail from the cat tube. It is recommended that the cat tube also be removed. This prevents a damaged or unused tube from distorting and affecting adjacent tubes or perhaps even falling in the firebox causing other damage. If the tube stays or is removed the support system must be evaluated especially if multiple tubes are on a single support system. It has been noted that some specialized companies can crimp the tubes on-line with certain designs; the Terrace Wall Reformer is one of these. The feed is pulled out, steam still flowing, firing reduced and effectively not making H₂ during this time period but shutdown and start up (a thermal cycle on the cat tubes) are prevented.

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