

Case Study: Sonoco Products Company

Protecting Mission Critical Manufacturing Production and Assets with Flood Fighting Solutions

“We’ve had two threats of flooding since we started with Portadam. In both cases we were able to deploy in short period. In one case, we were ready to go in 4 hours.”

–Chris Hopkins, General Plant Services Manager”

About the client

Sonoco Products Company is one of the largest global diversified packaging companies based out of Hartsville, South Carolina. Sonoco is the world’s largest producer of uncoated recycled paperboard as well as industrial carriers, including tubes, cores, cones and protective packaging. In addition, the Company is the world’s largest producers of rigid paper cans as well as provider of flexible and rigid plastic packaging primarily for consumer food and healthcare products.



About Us

Portadam has been providing water control solutions including flood protection, cofferdams and fluid storage to national and international clients for decades. Our engineered, modular solutions are custom designed and adaptable to provide site-specific configurations.

We are a full-service flood protection solutions provider diverting floodwaters away from key assets and structures such as manufacturing facilities, emergency response centers, treatment plants, power plants, substations, and other critical infrastructure.



“Portadam’s engagement and technical knowledge were very beneficial. They were able to provide us with scenarios and examples and we were able to analyze and evaluate what would and wouldn’t work for us. They understood our constraints and goals and delivered what was needed. They aligned well with our culture and have been true partners. I could contact any member of their team and they would be there for us.”

–Michelle Sansbury, Regional Process Improvement Leader



Objective

In 2018, Sonoco's Hartsville campus experienced devastating losses due to the flooding caused by Hurricane Matthew. The Sonoco leadership team knew they needed to begin investigating methods to prevent future damage during inclement weather.

Up to that time the facility relied on building barriers, raising motors, eliminating inventory, and getting raw materials and finished goods to an elevated area in response to flood events. However, after Hurricane Matthew, the team realized that the entire paper mill could be inundated and they needed a better way to address this risk and protect the manufacturing assets and inventory on the expansive campus.



The Sonoco team was seeking a rapid response plan to prevent flooding during weather emergencies. Due to the time sensitive nature of a natural disaster, they required a solution that could be deployed directly by their team without the need to rely on a contractor. The Sonoco team researched solution providers. After learning about Portadam's capabilities they contacted and engaged with the Portadam team. They were impressed by their prior deployments, expertise, and their consultative approach to designing custom flood protection solutions.

Solution

The Portadam team got to work on an all-inclusive analysis and custom solution. The process included:

- Thorough consultation and collaboration with key plant personnel
- An extensive site survey
- Review of operational requirements
- Development of facility and elevation layouts
- Identification of obstructions
- Assessment of water movement

Based on this analysis, the Portadam team proposed solutions for increasing security and safety and reducing risks in basement areas. The solution included nearly 5,000 linear feet of barriers in varying heights, recommendations for site preparation including getting clearance under structures, storing & staging of flood mitigation equipment in appropriate areas of the facility, as well as developing deployment action plans by risk level.



Portadam's team then provided full day classroom and in-field instruction for how to deploy and use the equipment. The solution presented also included remote support during weather events and annual refresher training on an as-needed basis.

Outcome

With the assistance of Portadam, Sonoco's team was able to properly deploy almost 5,000 linear feet of flood protection equipment relative to the deployment locations and team assignments. By providing proper equipment, action plans, and training for different risk levels, the Sonoco team has been able to successfully manage two potential flooding incidents since Hurricane Matthew. During those deployments, visual aids enabled the Sonoco employees to deploy effectively and quickly resulting in no damage to their Hartsville manufacturing facility.



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