

Case Study

Co-processing Waste Materials in Cement Production

Erika Waste Recovery

The Example of Holcim Support for Oil Tanker Spill Clean-up

BACKGROUND

Environmental disaster struck in December 1999 when the oil tanker Erika was wrecked off the coast of France, spilling thousands of tonnes of oil that washed ashore on the fragile beaches of Brittany.

Clean-up was hampered by rough weather, and 19,000 tonnes of oil produced over 300,000 tonnes of waste. The responsible tanker operator wanted to find a way to recycle the waste as a material or energy source.

PROCESS

Holcim France Benelux was engaged to help dispose of some of the recovered waste by co-processing the sludge as alternative fuels and raw materials (AFR) in our cement kilns. But before the contract was awarded, a rigorous review was conducted and our technology carefully examined in action.

The BEMTI (Boues d'Épuration Mixtes Traitées Industriellement) process set up at the Holcim Obourg plant in 1998 is unique in the cement sector and is used for the recovery of chiefly mineral residues.

Trials were also carried out at the Rochefort cement plant, where a pyrolysis kiln is used for pre-processing, before the recovery of mineral waste containing organic components (hydrocarbons).

Once the trials were successfully completed, the first waste shipment arrived at Obourg in January 2003. In all, more than 20,000 tonnes of pre-treated sludge (limed and pressed) were fed into the kiln lines of Holcim France-Benelux.

GOOD PRACTICE

The expertise that Holcim's AFR team had acquired over more than 15 years in the field was key to winning the contract.

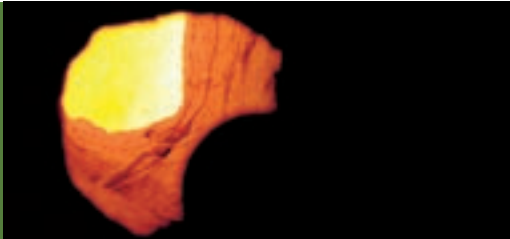
The dedication and hard work of Holcim specialists was more than matched by the Group's technology. Holcim has an established program of sharing knowledge and multiplying good practices across its global operations.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

It is clear that our AFR solutions enable the Group to respond to growing demands from industry and local authorities for waste treatment across an ever-widening range of applications.

Respect for the environmental and a commitment to sustainable development underpin Holcim know-how, while the Group's AFR policy provides strong and responsible principles to guide behavior.





Feeding the sludge into the kilns.

LESSONS LEARNT

Demonstrating the Group's ability to contribute to difficult waste recovery solutions builds Holcim's own experience and expertise while growing our reputation as a responsible service provider.

Now that Holcim has gained this know-how, demonstrating it so convincingly in this example, the Group is in an excellent position to offer this solution for similar environmental disasters if and when they arise.



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19,000 tonnes of spilled oil produced more than 300,000 tonnes of waste.

REFERENCES

www.coprocem.com

www.holcim.com/sustainable