



TEPPFA INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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PIPES CONFERENCE: LANDMARK PAPERS EXPECTED

Budapest. Some landmark papers are expected at the XIV Plastics Pipes Conference according to the organisers of the event. The conference brings together the global plastic pipe community and its many technical and commercial experts. It will be held from 22 – 24 September 2008 at the Marriott Hotel in Budapest.

"Our conferences provide the platforms for announcing important breakthroughs in the development of plastic pipe technology. From blueprint to newsprint, this year's event will be no exception," explains Joel Fumire, the event's vice president and technical manager for Solvin.

"Items of significant interest will be a solid technical proposal for the replacement with plastic alternatives of large diameter cast iron and steel pipes for the gas industry, test results on plastic pipes used to transport sulphuric acid for 21 years and lastly, a full dry system developed for pipe bi-orientation that will generate new opportunities for the future of PVC-O pipes. Important information on the development of new raw materials will also be released."

Conference keynote speaker is Ray Hammond, Europe's preeminent futurologist. His World in 2030 forecasts a "positive outlook for **plastics**," arguing that the material has an important part to play in overcoming future challenges, including climate change, health care and caring for an aging population. His future vision of climate change is one that will wreak havoc as the weather becomes more extreme. "Are we prepared for arctic-style winters and monsoon summers in Western Europe?" Hammond asks.

Pierre Belloir, the event's co-vice president and PE pipe technical manager for Total is convinced that the Budapest conference will be a turning point for plastic pipe technology. "Plastic pipe technology is transforming the utility infrastructure and building practices in Central Eastern Europe. Although available in the region since the early sixties, the technology was viewed as unfamiliar. Political and economic values have changed all that. Today, Budapest is an appropriate venue given the enormous switch over to plastic pipe systems in Hungary and in the rest of the region."

The three-day conference schedule will comprise the presentation of about one hundred papers, a trade exhibition and a social program. 500 participants are expected for what has become an ideal meeting place for delegates and the latest ideas from utility companies, technical and certification institutes, plastic pipe companies, equipment manufacturers, compound makers and other suppliers.

Plastic Pipes XIV is organised by TEPPFA, PE 100 +, PVC4Pipes and the Plastics Pipe Institute. A new brochure with full program is available from the Conference website alongside registration and further information:

IN TOUCH WITH THE DUTCH

Greven. Plastic pipe systems are used extensively for the protection of underground electrical cables, telecom fibre glass and other communication networks. A recent order for 60,000 connections in Almere for the Dutch city's fibre to the home network illustrates the important role played by plastic pipes systems in this sector.

387 kilometres of multi-microduct are being supplied by egeplast to TKF, a Dutch cable operator. It is anticipated that the eventual network will promote teleworking, telemedicine, e-learning and many other fundamental communication activities.

MIND THE GAP...

Milano. There are many thousands of old leaking sewer and water pipes in Italy. This in a country where water is becoming dangerously scarce. Now an eminent Italian Professor has worked out the actual cost to Italian society of modernising these networks with plastic pipe systems. He has also calculated the enormous costs of doing nothing to fix the problem. Whereas his final results will not be published until next month, his preliminary gap analysis is already starting to awaken the Italian psyche.

Professor Alessandro Marangoni from the prestigious Bocconi University of Milan has been working closely with an independent team of experts. "Every year, water leakage is costing Italian customers as much as EUR 4 (USD 6) billion," he explains. "In Italy, cracked or broken water mains for example, have a leakage rate of 38 - 45%. Compare this to the best performers in Europe such as Germany's 8 - 15% or The Netherlands where not a single drop of water is permitted then the scale of the wastage is evident."

Cost projections were also made for replacing as many as 125,000 km of porous water pipes and 46,000 km of cracked sewer pipes over the next fifty years. They included economic, environmental and social effects generated through the innovative use of plastics such as no-dig methods. The Professor's cost-benefit analysis was thus applied on a keen basis to appreciate the direct and indirect costs:

$$C(\Sigma) = C(\text{material}) + C(\text{building}) + C(\text{maintenance}) + C(\text{social/environmental})$$

His conclusions are expected to shock. Total investments for the water industry alone amount to EUR 62 (USD 98) billion.

In addition to impacts, the professor consulted with various stakeholders such as pipe manufacturers, installers and maintenance contractors, utility network owners and managers and lastly consumers (individuals, industry and commerce). He also considered the implications of time (delay) and the transported product itself: water, wastewater and gas. "My study is therefore a comprehensive review of what could be and the real cost to society if this vision is not turned into reality,"

Now that the Professor has extrapolated the cost benefits of plastic pipes and the true cost of doing nothing, he intends to announce his findings at a conference in

May. "Public minds and public purses need to be opened. We cannot allow the message to go in one ear and out the other. If only Italian pipes could retain their contents while entering one end and leaving the other. By scrimping on these investments we have failed to harness one of the main drivers of economic growth, namely necessary public investment."

"The current credit squeeze that is adversely influencing economic growth within and outside Italy should be counteracted by making such sound investments. Public health and public hygiene absolutely require investment in the efficient delivery of drinking water and in sewer networks that do not pollute."

NO MORE 'TWICE ON THE PIPE'

Manchester. There was a time when old buildings were renowned for their sonorous metal pipes. They have even prompted a romantic lyric of the 'knock three times on the ceiling, twice on the pipe' variety. But in the new luxury Macdonald Manchester Hotel, there will be none of that.

This £48 million development comprises a 338 bedroom hotel in the heart of the city. It will be equipped extensively with plastic pipes and fittings provided by Marley. A combination of the firm's PVCu Push-fit soil pipe systems, 15mm Equator pipes and manifolds have been installed throughout the 10-storey building by contractors CMB Fylde Engineering Ltd, Blackpool.

The adaptable soil pipe system with a number of connecting soil stacks was specified to facilitate easy navigation of the curved structure, whilst the Equator hot and cold pipe systems, manufactured from high grade cross linked polyethylene, ensure long term durability and performance capabilities throughout the system.

Developed specifically for commercial applications, the manifold system allows a number of WC's on each floor to be connected to one central point, providing an efficient solution and eliminating the need for additional fittings.

The hotel occupies a former BT building that is one of Manchester's best known landmarks since the nineteen seventies. Whereas its new plastic pipe systems may not produce cacophony or inspire a romantic lyric, they are expected to perform perfectly for at least the next 100 years

FROM THE PRINCIPLE TO THE PRACTICAL

Krakow. CE Marking could jeopardise the image of the European plastic pipe industry. The European Plastic Pipes & Fittings Association (TEPPFA) does not want this. It agreed recently at a meeting of its General Assembly in Poland to adopt practical ways to accommodate the legal obligations and requirements of the new regime.

TEPPFA has always promoted stringent requirements for Quality Marks. But industry experts argue that CE Marking can lower quality benchmarks and encourage inferior imports. Tinus de Lange who is manager for certificates and standards at Wavin explains: "The founding principle of CE Marking was to encourage free trade and thus more competition. Unfortunately it cannot be assumed that it confirms the quality expected. Ceci n'est pas une pipe! There are no marketing benefits and absolutely no savings in costs for testing and certification."

"And the scheme is not without risks, namely the influx of cheap and inferior pipe products. More competition is not a problem. But unfair competition is. There is for example, no system of sanctions for non compliance or false CE Marking. CE Marking may well be a sign but it is one that could lead to mediocrity. Already the market is either confused at most or unimpressed at least. And its appearance might well have the effect of downgrading existing Quality Marks."

The TEPPFA strategy is therefore to continue using Quality Marks. It does this through coordinating activities of its national associations. Practical methods of preparing Attestations of Conformity (AoC's), standard documentation and using web related techniques have also been agreed to lessen the administrative burden.

More information on quality marks and CE certification can be found on www.teppfa.org

SEWER POLITICS TAKE CENTRE STAGE

Chicago. Chicago is famous for the Bulls, Al Capone, Mother O'Leary's cow and Judy Garland's rendition of the City's famous lyrics. Now Hillary Clinton recently had something to say in the 'Windy City' about the state of US sewers. And she has a point.

She proposed the creation of a national investment authority to rebuild basic infrastructure like sewers. Good for her! The US overtaxed sewer network sends 860 billion gallons of raw or partially treated sewage each year into the nation's waterways. US aging sewers comprise pipe networks that are 50 to 100 years old. Uncle Sam is crying out for modern plastic pipe systems.

However, the price tag for fixing the problem is enormous. American Rivers, the environmental group estimates the nation's sewage systems need \$390 billion worth of work over the next 20 years. With the Federal Reserve still in a state of credit paralysis, Hillary has clearly taken a leaf out of the Keynesian bible. Wise public investment!

In Chicago (to paraphrase Garland's immortal song) they may well 'do things that they don't do on Broadway'. The democrats clearly think that it is time they did!

TEPPFA INTERNATIONAL NEWS is published by The European Plastic Pipes & Fittings Association based in Brussels. TEPPFA is a European partnership of manufacturers of quality plastic pipe systems, used in building, infrastructure and civil projects, that strongly promotes and defends its industry. TEPPFA member's products are made from innovative engineering materials which are sustainable and contribute significantly to giving quality to life. Editorial email: james_russell@plastic-pipes.com