



TEPPFA INTERNATIONAL NEWS

01 August 2009

CAUTION AS RECYCLING TARGETS ACHIEVED

Brussels. The plastic pipe industry in Europe is within reach of achieving its recycling targets by 2010. But given the difficult market conditions for recycling companies, industry watchers are cautious.

TEPPFA has occupied a central role in promoting schemes for the collection and recycling of plastic pipe waste and co-signed the PVC industry's Voluntary Commitment (VC) in 2000. This promise to work towards a cumulative recycling aim of 200,000 tons has been widely perceived as an industry standard for sustainable development.

Last year's target was exceeded by 12% with the completion of 191,000 tons. Roel van t' Veer, TEPPFA's spokesman on the VC explains: "Plastic pipes still occupy a small percentage of all the rigid or flexible products that are recycled due to their expected life of more than 100 years. To date, we are talking about over 21,000 tons although it has to be said that this share is growing. The landfill directive has clearly stimulated supply but it is the demand side that has us concerned."

"In 2008, as many as 110 recyclers throughout Europe were involved with direct recycling activities. Plastic pipes can easily be recycled into for example, new sewer pipes. However, the demand for recyclate depends heavily on the differential cost of new raw materials. Several recycling companies are expected to close down this year and we are tracking the market very closely to intervene where possible."

"The PVC industry's Voluntary Commitment to recycling rigid and flexible PVC products is the only initiative throughout Europe that has so far succeeded where other segments had to rely on legislation."

GREEN LIGHT FOR GREEN DECLARATIONS

Brussels. The plastic pipe industry is to press ahead with plans to develop Environmental Product Declarations for major pipe application areas. Various product groups have been identified and consultants appointed to assist the process.

The European Plastic Pipe & Fittings Association (TEPPFA) has already surveyed numerous Life Cycle Assessments in preparation for EPD's. Zoran Davidovski, industry expert on HSE matters for the Association comments: "Our industry focus on sustainability has led to a solid base of scientific expertise. We shall now use this technical insight to analyse the environmental performance of our products."

TEPPFA has singled out the most relevant product groups in the building, utilities and 'civils' segments. "Plastic pipe systems are recognised throughout the world for combining durability with high performance. Endorsing this perception with

sustainability credentials will differentiate our products. It will also anticipate the trend towards EU environmental thinking in this field," says Davidovski.

Life Cycle Impact Assessment for the designated product groups has already commenced and results are expected to be published by the association in the course of 2010.

FIRST OLYMPIC PIPES DELIVERED

London. London's Olympic village and stadium will embrace a network of plastic pipes for a multitude of applications. Latest arrivals include communication and camera cables that link control rooms with the TV platforms in the stadium bowl dugout.

Black and orange Metro Twinwall pipes in 160 mm diameter have been supplied to accommodate the communication and power cables from the International Press Centre (IPC) Control Rooms to the TV platforms. Black smooth pipes for chilled water distribution pipes have also been made and delivered. Called the Excel (PE100) Pipe, it has been supplied in 180mm diameter.

Constructed in two phases, the stadium will eventually accommodate over 17,200 athletes and officials. An architect close to the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) informs this new service that both stadium and the Velodrome which will host the Olympic and Paralympic indoor track cycling will rely on plastic pipes for a host of services required.

OBAMA: STILL WATERS RUN DEEP

Irving, Texas. Money from Obama's stimulus package could go further if plastic pipes were used for infrastructure projects. According to the Plastics Pipe Institute (PPI), this policy would save money in time and materials as well as millions of dollars that flow down the drain from wasted water.

"Infrastructure managers have struggled to replace aging water and sewer systems," says Tony Radoszewski, executive director of the PPI. "Now with the stimulus package signed by President Obama they can do the job and install a superior system that is more economical and environmentally responsible. They can make each dollar go further and have a system built for 2009, not 1909."

Radoszewski points out that US figures for water loss are staggering and that due to inherent physical limitations of non plastic pipe systems, it is common practice for utilities to have 10 – 15 percent rate of water loss. Some water companies even hit 40 percent.

The amount of water lost through leaking pipes has been estimated by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ACSE) in their 2009 report card to be seven billion gallons of clean drinking water per day.

But Radoszewski explains that it is not only an issue of cost. "Leaking sanitary sewer and storm sewer pipes can also contaminate drinking water, promote sink holes and cause flooding that destroys roads and property.

There is also the energy cost to purify water that never gets to the end user – the rate payers of the community. Now is the time to use the economic stimulus package to rehabilitate aging water and sewer systems with plastic pipelines to build a lasting underground infrastructure that conserves resources and protects the environment,” Radoszewski concludes.

PPI is the major US trade association representing all segments of the plastic piping industry.

MORE PLASTIC PIPES NEEDED

Mumbai. Acute water shortages in India’s State of Maharashtra have been partially mitigated by European plastic pipe technology. However, many water experts argue that more is required.

Mumbai is now facing its worst water shortages in history with supplies reduced by 30%. Lack of monsoon rainfall will directly affect millions of homes, many businesses and hospitals.

India with its preoccupation with steel making has not always been quick to realize the benefits of plastic pipes. But there are regional exceptions and one is the state of Maharashtra.

A rather interesting initiative was recently taken 400 kilometres to the South of Mumbai in the village of Malkapur. Like many villages in rural India, Malkapur relied on an intermittent and inadequate water supply system which leaves its residents queuing many hours at public taps for their meagre share. However, the Maharashtra State government was intent on improving this situation by providing a continuous water supply via a pipe system with a greatly reduced leakage rate.

Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran (MJP), the Water Supply and Sewer Board in the state of Maharashtra which finances and owns the project, required the new network to reduce water loss to less than 5%, and supply a projected population of 67,000 by 2030. MJP chose a polyethylene plastic water pipe system for its high quality and durability, made of PE100 material together with electrofusion fittings for leak-free jointing.

Drips save many drops

Another initiative in the State has been the promotion of drip irrigation through plastic pipes. It was introduced two decades ago and is intensively practised in most farming districts of Maharashtra. Drip Methods of Irrigation (DMI) are most suitable for wide-spaced crops in water scarce areas since water is applied straight to the crop-root zone through a network of plastic pipes and drip emitters.

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: russell_chr@yahoo.com