

CEMEX KEEPS NEW TILBURY PLANT SHIP SHAPE WITH COMPVAC™



In September 2009, the global building materials company CEMEX opened a new cement grinding and blending plant at the Port of Tilbury in Essex. The £49 million investment underlined CEMEX's commitment to sustainable construction, and the 1.2 million tonne plant has increased CEMEX UK's cement capacity by 20%.

The basis for the products made at Tilbury is cement clinker, which is ground to a powder and blended with by-products from other industries to make cements for use in buildings and infrastructure projects. By reducing the amount of clinker in the blended cement, every tonne goes further, reduces embodied Co2 by 30% and therefore the impact of its manufacture, and makes it more sustainable. Two types of cement are produced at Tilbury, CEM 1 which is an ordinary Portland cement, and CEM 2 which is a blend of Portland and 30% PFA or pulverised fuel ash.

HIGH TECH CEMENT MILL AS SHOWCASE FOR VISITORS

The plant also boasts the first vertical cement mill in the UK, which uses 20-40% less energy than traditional horizontal mills. The mill combined with the blended cement capabilities, shipping, barge and rail loading facilities mean that the plant's carbon footprint per tonne of finished product is further reduced.

The Tilbury plant is a showcase for high tech cement manufacture so it receives a lot of visitors, and that means keeping everything as clean as possible. The man responsible for achieving the highest standards of housekeeping at the Tilbury site is Tony Drake: *"We found that the cleaning solution was to get a CompVac™."*



Les Thomas, responsible for purchasing at CEMEX Tilbury, was involved in the decision to hire the industrial vacuum machine: *“The CompVac’s™ really good. We initially hired for one month back in January to see what it could do. It’s proved to be exactly what we need so we hired it out for another six months, and since then we’ve decided to hire it to the end of the year with a view to purchasing one.”*

COMPVAC™: IDEAL FOR SUCKING UP LOOSE CEMENT POWDER

Tony Drake: *“The main aim with the CompVac™ is to remove and recycle as much as possible, but cement powder is a bit like water in its behaviour when loose. So it doesn’t need a lot of imagination to see that the old ways of cleaning up and removing the cement powder with brooms shovels and brushes are not only very inefficient but involve all sorts of manual handling issues which we’re very keen to avoid wherever possible.”*

“That’s why we like the CompVac™. It’s ideal for vacuuming up all the spillages, and as we’ve got 32 amp welding sockets all around the plant, it’s easy to move it with a forklift to wherever we want to clean up any dust build up around the plant generally. It’s got a fully enclosed system, so there’s no risk of dust escaping and with the waste dust in the hopper, it’s then very easy to recycle it into the reject pile and put it all back into the manufacturing process.”

“The operatives on site love using the CompVac™ compared to brooms, brushes and barrows. It’s much easier and faster, so less time is involved, and using it is virtually dust-free so there are no dust inhalation issues either. They’re over the moon about it; it’s just a simple case of pointing the nozzle at the loose dust or powder and job done!”

GOOD FOR THE EMPLOYEES, GREAT FOR THE VISITORS

The CompVac™ is used for all the housekeeping activities to ensure the plant remains in a good clean condition at all times. For CEMEX it’s also good business practice as they are recycling any waste material the Gotland machine vacuums up.

Tony Drake: *“Because it’s a new site and the only vertical mill of its kind in the UK, we get a lot of visitors. Having the CompVac™ on site as part of our cleaning resources makes it easy for us to keep on top of things and make sure the whole plant is as clean as possible for the visitors. We get a lot of positive feedback about the cleanliness of the plant.”*

“So with the spillage recycling, dust removal, ease of use, safer working environment, and higher housekeeping standards we’re achieving, we can say that the CompVac™ a great cleaning solution for CEMEX and its showcase site at Tilbury.”

