



Residential buildings are built in Minsk's Brilevichi micro-district using modern energy conservation technologies

Conserving heat in the home

New residential buildings to be designed, taking into account requirements of high energy conservation

By Timofey Karbyshev

From April of this year, residential buildings are being designed only with energy-saving technologies. "For our country, this is an almost revolutionary task, although the subject isn't new worldwide or in Europe," notes the Deputy Minister for Architecture and Construction, Dmitry Semenkevich.

Only new contracts are affected, not existing builds, but Mr. Semenkevich notes that the move will bring pressure on designers to meet their schedules, while implementing the new rules. "We understand that this is an additional burden on design organisations in terms of increased costs," Mr. Semenkevich adds. "These technologies and design solutions affect not just the technological parameters of buildings, but every aspect of their design." It will be interesting to see how the new rules affect costs over the next six months, since this will ultimately affect the price of energy efficient housing.

Ventilation systems are being designed to conserve heat, since 60 percent of a home's warmth is lost in this way, rather than through the walls or windows. Naturally, new materials and innovative approaches are likely to come to the fore in response to the new legislation, as Mr. Semenkevich emphasises. He notes that enterprises are no longer obliged to pay into the state innovation funds, since these are now financed from 10 percent of the tax on profits. Instead, enterprises can use the money they would usually have transferred into the fund to upgrade their own facilities.



Solar panels on energy efficient houses is a new peculiarity in the Belarusian capital

Major changes have been made to legislation governing construction, with just over a hundred norms in place (other directives serve only as guidelines). "It's a great opportunity for design organisations to reconsider how they work, bringing more of an innovative approach," Mr. Semenkevich underlines. Some investment projects will receive state

support from the state, with some particular construction projects already approved and bank loans allocated (for later full or partial repayment).

Producers are worried as to whether their innovative products will be in demand since design companies tend to prefer tried and tested technologies, being cautious about

new proposals. Meanwhile, manufacturers lack experience of market promotion. "The question of enterprises helping fund new approaches is very interesting," asserts the Deputy Minister for Architecture and Construction. "I firmly think we should move away from companies receiving innovative products at the expense of the state."

Since designers are limited by legislation, it's best for producers to liaise directly with customers, to allow innovations to be closely tailored to specific needs. In addition, all avenues of promotion should be explored: catalogues of goods for domestic and foreign buyers; attendance at trade fairs to present innovations; and participation in trade conferences. "We're ready to assist enterprises in promoting their innovative products," notes Mr. Semenkevich. "However, within the framework of the Customs Union, we face a situation of open competition, on equal terms with companies in Russia and Kazakhstan."

Design organisations remain cautious. "We consider the decision of switching to energy-efficient construction hasty, for several reasons," admits the Director of Minskgrazhdanproekt Institute, Oleg Bykovsky. He questions the feasibility of the new approach. Even if prices raise 7-8 percent, as is usual with experimental homes buyers will be need significant additional funds to foot the bill. Meanwhile, it may take some time for expenditure to pay for itself in lower heating bills. "I'm not saying that we should return to the Stone Age but the operational issues are undeniable," Mr. Bykovsky stresses.

The Deputy Minister for Architecture and Construction adds, "A programme for energy-efficient construction has existed since 2008, with enterprises encouraged to explore new solutions. I believe that design organisations will step up to the mark, implementing our new policy. It's simply essential."

Heavy-duty dump trucks being tested in India and Zambia

By Yuri Chernyakevich

Famous Belarusian manufacturers' vehicles making impression on Asian and African markets

Belarusian flagship BelAZ, which is well known worldwide, is ever seeking out new sales markets, such as those in Asia and India. The company is currently marketing itself and hopes to set up a service and maintenance centre for its machinery by the end of the year, in India, as a joint venture. Kirill Kazachenko, BelAZ's Deputy Director General

for Marketing and Export Policy, tells us, "We're entering the Indian market with a view to offering good service, which should help us in promoting our goods."

By the end of the year, the enterprise plans to sell ten 220 tonne vehicles to private Indian coal companies — worth \$22m. Meanwhile, jointly with Indian partners, BelAZ is taking part in tenders to supply machinery to African countries: particularly, Zambia.

Many European countries, including Russia (the major buyer of Belarusian heavy-duty dump



BelAZ conquers new markets

trucks) are forecasting reduced production volumes, which may result in less demand for BelAZ

goods. According to Mr. Kazachenko, extracting industries are stagnating around the globe,

requiring BelAZ to be proactive in seeking out new customers. He adds, "It was expected that coal prices would rise in the second half of the year but this didn't happen. Our traditional buyers lack funds to pay for our machinery so we're focusing on new custom in Australia, South-Africa, Zambia and Indonesia."

MAZ has been selling to India for almost a decade but it has taken some time to find investors to set up joint production; negotiations are underway and, soon, issues regarding MAZ exports could be solved.