

Underground waste bins: preferable and hygienic

Smorgon begins production of containers to hold rubbish underground

By Tatiana Smirnova

It's awe-inspiring to think how much effort is required to keep our cities clean. Trucks are continuously at work, at great cost and effort, to say nothing of fuel and workers' salaries. Unsurprisingly, it can be difficult to find people willing to drive waste collection trucks or help load them. Dealing with rubbish is not a glamorous occupation.

Experts have long been puzzling over how best to keep our cities pristine and are planning to adopt a system already popular across Europe. Belarus has been manufacturing underground containers, first at Minsk Electro-technical Plant, and now at Smorgon Plant of Optical Machine-Tool Construction.

Tatiana Lepilina, who heads marketing and sales at the enterprise, tells us, "It's a much more hygienic way of gathering rubbish than the usual rubbish bins. By installing underground waste containers, at public transport stops, it avoids the usual unpleasant smell of decaying waste, as temperatures underground are lower. It's also impossible to burn rubbish when it's underground; we've conducted experiments, burning the contents of the containers. Rather than

thriving, the fire simply died out." As rubbish is kept hermetically concealed, wild animals and birds cannot get into it to make a mess.

"These rubbish bins would be emptied twice monthly," Ms. Lepilina continues. "It's of great importance, especially at public transport stops, where the bins become filled really quickly." Such containers are already in use in neighbouring Russia and the new technology is now being tested in Minsk. If such underground bins are installed everywhere, it should solve a lot of problems.

"Underground containers, as a rule, are installed in public places," emphasises the Deputy Minister for Housing and Communal Services, Anatoly Shagun. "This helps to improve the city's aesthetics, since we only see a small opening above ground. Basically, we're replacing simple garbage cans with underground containers. It doesn't stop us from gathering different types of rubbish separately, for collection by different vehicles, for sending to processing stations."

While Belarus is borrowing the main idea from Germany, its own variant uses pits with a separate 'glass' lining, rather than concrete. The surround is then asphalted. It's a solution which saves on installation time.



Underground rubbish containers will soon improve the city's appearance

Projects worth millions of Dollars

By Vladimir Samsonov

Turkish investor to finance construction of five-star hotel in Minsk

The \$70m+ investment project will bring a contemporary hotel complex to the centre of the Belarusian capital, meeting world standards. The design will fit harmoniously into the existing architecture of the city's main Nezavisimosti Avenue.

Other landmark contracts signed in 2013 include those governing the construction of multifunctional complexes for Gazprom Transgaz Belarus and Zomex Investment. In total, these three projects will attract at least \$500m of direct investment into Minsk's economy.

3D oil search

By Sergey Smirnov

Belorusneft Production Association is to expand its presence in Ecuador in the sphere of hydrocarbon exploration and extraction

Co-operation prospects have been discussed in Gomel during negotiations between Belorusneft and representatives of Ecuadorian Surtek, Intermipetrol and Phoenix Oil-Gas. They debated the use of progressive oil recovery methods in Ecuador and Belarus.

A branch of Belorusneft was registered in Ecuador in late 2012, enabling it to take part in enhanced oil recovery projects in Ecuador. It has two seismic teams working in the Amazon selva, under contract with the Ecuadorian state oil company Petroamazonas EP, to conduct 3D seismic searches for hydrocarbon deposits.

Profitable waste for many regions

Grodno enterprise without domestic rival

JSC Belvtorpolymer is now recycling polyethylene and polypropylene, thanks to an investment project worth about 30 billion Roubles. Realised according to the state programme of collection and processing of secondary raw materials, it is unique not only in Belarus but across the former Soviet Union.

The Grodno enterprise aims at import substitution and will export 90 percent of its products. It is purifying and processing waste materials, turning them into granulated polyethylene and polypropylene, for use in making polyethylene pipes, film, plastic bags, various types of containers and construction materials.

Of about 120,000 tonnes of annual waste in Belarus, about 30,000 tonnes are being recycled. The Grodno Processing Complex can provide services not only to its region but to others countrywide.

Market open for all

There has been speculation online that medicines from abroad will no longer be imported into Belarus where domestic analogues exist

However, the Ministry for Health has officially denied this, noting that the law 'On Medical Products' only prohibits medicines of poor-quality, as well as those forged or with expired dates. All registered medicines, both domestic and foreign, have the right to be sold on the pharmaceutical market.

Equal demands are placed on all producers during registration, following European Pharmacopoeia standards. About 6,000 names are currently registered, of which more than 1,200 are made in Belarus. Those from Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan are prominent also. The state is encouraging import substitution of medical products, aiming to expand the range of domestic competitive medicines and introduce new developments.

Special train for 'hauliers'

Thanks to the close co-operation of Belarusian and Lithuanian railways, the piggyback train Nemunas has made a test run



Crossing the border in comfort, on Nemunas

By Anton Kostyukevich

Called Nieman in Belarusian, the train is able to haul not just containers, but lorries with trailers, which can drive onto special platforms.

Such technology is still a novelty in the CIS, although is popular in Western Europe, where the idea is called a 'running highway': journeys can be made partly by train and partly by vehicle, uninter-

rupted. Naturally, this saves time — and money! It should greatly help 'hauliers' crossing the Belarusian-Lithuanian border, saving them from tiresome queues.

The Nieman train will cover the distance from Kolyadichi, near Minsk, to Kaunas in approximately 11 hours and 50 minutes — taking into account customs registration and border control. Igor Zgursky, who heads cargo work and foreign-economic activity for Belarusian Railways, explains, "Now planning for the new route is underway, we're identifying possible bottlenecks and exact geography, with a view to making alterations."

The destiny of the new train, to a large extent, will be defined by the hauling companies' interest. However, preliminary analysis shows that Nemunas will be in demand.