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NEIGHBORS

A SERVICE OF ASH GROVE CEMENT COMPANY – DURKEE PLANT | FALL 2011

Ash Grove Hits \$20 Million Energy Reduction Goal

This August Ash Grove plants throughout the country achieved an ambitious goal to reduce energy costs by \$20 million – 15 months early, another Ash Grove energy management (AGem) success.

“Chuck Wiedenhoft always described the goal in terms of a three legged stool –reduce emissions, improve efficiency and reduce costs,” said Andy Lippert, Ash Grove corporate energy director, of the company’s then president and chief operating officer who died in 2010. “He got this started in 2007 and we set a five-year time horizon to make it happen.” *(continued on page 2)*



Durkee plant

Dust Shuttling System Begins Operation

Ash Grove Cement Durkee is implementing a system that takes a small amount of the return dust from the primary pollution control device employed in the cement manufacturing process and shuttles it into the finish mill so that it becomes a part of

A NOTE FROM TERRY KERBY, PLANT MANAGER



Terry Kerby, plant manager

While the economy has yet to do its part to get things back on a healthy path, our employees are more than doing theirs. Skilled and smart, they are always working together to come up with the best ideas.

Ash Grove Cement Durkee employees not only do well for the plant, they enjoy giving back to our community as you will read in other stories here on such activities as the Miner’s Jubilee Parade, the Baker City tire clean up and the Baker and Malhuier County fairs.

We have a great group of people who love what they do and where they do it, knowing that it takes a bit of effort on everyone’s part to make a great community. There are so many great things going on around Durkee, it’s fun to learn about where others are volunteering, how our kids are doing in livestock shows, just how complicated it is to put on a parade, and more.

You may have heard that new federal regulations from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) require cement plants to meet higher emissions and monitoring standards by September 2013. Ash Grove Cement Durkee continues to invest in its plant operations and will meet all the 2013 requirements. We all look forward to a long and bright future here in Durkee. ■

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the product rather than emit into the air.

“Once concrete is poured all elements are sealed in there forever,” said Chris Barrett, plant engineer. “The only way to get mercury out of dust is to heat it up. This shuttling system short cuts that process, takes the dust out of the heat process and puts it into the product. It’s another initiative to reduce emissions.”

When cement is manufactured to American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards, there is a percent of filler material allowed. This process which adds dust to the cement product meets that standard while contributing to the plant’s emission reduction goals. ■



Ash Grove's Durkee cement plant participated in the Miners Jubilee Parade held in Baker City, Ore., on July 17, 2011. Bottom right: Don O'Grady, Durkee maintenance repairman, stands on the float he helped prepare. He also drove it to the parade.

FIRST-PLACE PARADE FLOAT CAUSE FOR "MINER" CELEBRATION

Though Ash Grove Cement has long been a supporter of the Miner's Jubilee, it had been a while since the company entered a float in the annual parade.

The theme for the 2011 Miner's Jubilee was "Stake your claim in Baker County." A group of employees and community members led by Shipping Supervisor Vivian Zikmund and Community Advisory Committee Member Diane Bloomer, heeded that advice and staked Ash Grove's claim with a prize-winning parade entry.

"One float focused on the Durkee community and the other focused more on Ash Grove and the process of making cement," Zikmund said.

The Ash Grove float featured a large chunk of limestone and smaller piles of other raw materials, a "kiln" made out of barstool wrapped in black poster board, a pile of the clinker that comes out of the kiln, and the giant bag of cement that is produced by grinding the clinker and blending it with gypsum.

The second float was a little less technical. A flatbed truck carrying Ash Grove's giant barbecue grill was wrapped in a banner advertising the annual steak feed at the golf course. The truck pulled a trailer loaded with children, including many 4H members, waving to the crowd.

Both floats were wrapped in "antiqued" paper (created with a mixture of coffee grounds and soy sauce) listing mining claims in the area.

"We had about a dozen people working to put it together," Zikmund said. "The morning of the parade it rained a little bit and none of our glue was sticking, so we had to improvise. It took a lot of community involvement and teamwork to make it happen. It was a fun project and we're proud of how it turned out." ■

Ash Grove Hits \$20 Million Energy Reduction Goal

(continued from front cover)

To prepare, Lippert said that a team went through all the plants, five years of operating data and did some benchmarking. Then he joined Chuck, Ash Grove Chairman Charlie Sunderland, Vice President of Manufacturing Services Fran Streitman in meeting with senior staff and plant managers to design the program. In early 2008, the team held meetings at every plant with supervisors and hourly staff to talk it through and roll out the program.

"Employee suggestions have been gratifying," Lippert said. "Everything from turning on a conveyor belt only when it is moving material to putting motion detectors on lighting to installing heat exchangers and reclaiming heat off the clinker cooling process. We still are receiving ideas good enough to implement companywide."

The company already has begun writing goals and procedures for 2013 and beyond to continue to conserve energy and natural resources by improving the efficiency and performance of the plants. ■

Ash Grove Durkee Supports 4-H, FFA Youth

Ash Grove Cement Durkee is a regular supporter of our fairs in both Baker and Malheur counties. Each of these fairs showcase the hard work by children of the plant employees and other members of the community who are committed to 4-H and Future Farmers of America (FFA) programs that have them learning about and raising livestock.

"These kids work really hard all year long," said Chris Hughes, human resources and safety manager for Ash Grove Cement Durkee. "They not only do the care and feeding, they have to do a lot of research to know the animal's anatomy, its common diseases and the like and that is a big part of the show, being quizzed on their knowledge of the animals."

Hughes said the Malheur County Fair had about 500 kids participate in the livestock portion of the fair with Ash Grove purchasing two hogs and the FFA Champion rabbit. At the Baker County Fair, with up to 150 kids participating in the livestock portion, Ash Grove purchased two hogs, a steer, the Grand Champion goat and two lambs.

"The county fairs are a great place for Ash Grove to show its support of the kids and our community, and we are always pleased to join other community members and businesses in buying some of the livestock to help the kids offset some of their expenses and show our appreciation for their hard work," Hughes said. ■

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

Shane Halley



Shane Halley

Shane Halley got married on July 2, moved from Seattle to Richland and was working at his new position with Ash Grove Cement in Durkee on

July 24. It's a lot of change, but nothing to a guy who mixes a career of welding, metal fabrication and machining with an avocation of charcoal drawing and art that is 100 percent weld – no cut plates, all hand done.

Halley's work career has focused mostly on fabrication starting after a tour in the U.S. Navy with stints as shop foreman and owning two fabrication shops himself with clients ranging from Boeing to high-end yacht designer Delta Marine. Art has been a passion since he was a teenager.

"I've been drawing since high school," Halley said. "Since incorporating welding into my art, I have had the opportunity to work with some interesting people, like Dale Chihuly and Kenneth Snelson." Dale Chihuly, based in the Seattle area, is a world-famous glass artist with complex installations across the globe.

Snelson's work, based in New York, involves complicated and outsized sculptures that require a structural balance of webs of steel cables and polished metal cylinders.

The artists, particularly Chihuly, tend to be secretive about their process. For Chihuly, all Halley can say is he did, "... something to do with structures in his pieces." Halley's weld art has centered on vase structures but they are not like any vases you have ever seen. Some of his work involves chemical formulas and methodologies that defy logic, but somehow work. You can see some of the work at www.deviantART.com; just enter "Shane Halley" in the search. He currently is working through ideas for pieces that are more sculptural, involving movement triggered by the heat of sun.

Halley has had work in several galleries and is organizing his pieces so that he can show his work again. He's also starting on new projects. "I am quite happy being home," Halley said. "It inspires me to do new work, bigger and better pieces. I've got a million ideas." ■

Ash Grove Efficiency Program Helps Eastern Oregon Beat the Peak

For most folks, summer is a time for relaxation and vacation, but not if you work for the electric company. As we sip frosty drinks and enjoy the cool breezes blowing from our air conditioners, power plants are kicking into overdrive to meet the soaring demand for electricity.

When demand for power exceeds supply, utilities are faced with two choices. They can go buy extra electricity from energy traders at very high prices, or they can find some customers who are willing to unplug enough stuff to drop the demand for energy down to a manageable level.

If they choose Option A, the price we all pay for electricity goes up. If they choose Option B, it can be hard to find volunteers willing to forego the modern conveniences that electricity allows us to enjoy. Who wants to turn off their a/c on the hottest days of the year? That's where Ash Grove Plant Engineer Chris Barrett comes in.

Through an innovative partnership with Idaho Power, Ash Grove's Durkee Plant has adopted a program that helps the utility meet peak energy demand by adjusting portions of its production schedule. By running certain pieces of equipment at times when the demand for electricity is lower, Ash Grove can reduce its power consumption at peak times by 10 to 13 megawatts.

"For example, in our quarry we crush rock before it goes to the plant," Barrett said. "The rock crusher uses a 1,000-horsepower motor, which takes nearly a megawatt of power. Normally we run it during the day, but we can shift our schedule and run it at night and other off-peak times, and just stockpile the crushed rock so we have enough of it to feed into the plant later."

In 2010, there were only one or two occasions when Idaho Power needed Ash Grove's help conserving electricity, but this summer, there were roughly a dozen times when energy demand spiked enough to require peak shaving.

"We've been able to help keep the lights on and rates affordable for folks in our community, while saving money on the plant's electric bill," said Plant Manager Terry Kerby. "This program has been a true win-win situation." ■

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Durkee's Cement | I-84 Project

September marked the start of new highway project through its customer, Concrete Placement Company, using 18,000 tons of Ash Grove's cement with the project slated to finish, "Before the snow flies," said Mike Wood, regional sales manager for Ash Grove. The project, east of Boise, is an interstate reconstruction. ■

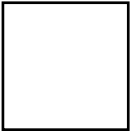
I-84, east of Boise.





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BAKER COUNTY CLEANS UP, AGAIN

Ash Grove Cement Durkee teamed up with Lew Brothers, Les Schwab Tires to host a Baker County Clean Up Day in May.

“We partner with Lew Brothers, Les Schwab to collect passenger and pick up truck tires and used batteries so that we can ensure proper disposal of those items,” said Terry Kerby, Ash Grove Cement Durkee’s plant manager. “We value the opportunity to assist the area’s residents with disposing of items that need special attention so they don’t end up in ditches and creek beds.”

About 20 Ash Grove volunteers joined the effort, collecting three Les Schwab tractor trailer loads of tires. The nearly 24 tons of tires are enough to power the Ash Grove plant for a day. “We burn it as an alternative fuel,” said Chris Barrett, plant engineer. “Cement kilns are one of the most efficient burners of waste because it is so hot, more than 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit, so tires burn completely.”

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Top photo: The morning shift; in trailer, l-r: Kevin Butler, electrician, and Chuck Buchanan, chemical analyst. Standing, l-r: Landon Fischer, physical tester; Dean Sappe, maintenance supervisor; Bill Zikmund, maintenance planner; Ron Meyer, quarry welder/mechanic; Tom Bunch, shift supervisor; and Mike Chandler, welder/repairman. Bottom photo: Chuck Buchanan takes a tire during Cleanup Day.

Rocky Brown, owner of Lew Brothers, Les Schwab, said, “These are materials you can’t just take to the dump. They are hard to get rid of and it’s great that Ash Grove agrees to take them at no charge, these waste tires that they can use for fuel. We’ve been doing this for several years now and we’re looking forward to the next time.” ■