

FINAL
PRESS RELEASE – TOP TIPS
29.06.18

Controlling your water management in mining

The current global demand for water is at the level of 4,500 billion m³ a year and is expected to rise to 6,900 billion m³ by 2030 – therefore, it's imperative that businesses take action to ensure sustainable water management is front of mind.

Philip Wood, International Business Development Manager at Polypipe, believes this can be done by implementing an effective water management strategy which can minimise carbon footprint, save time and improve worker's productivity.

Philip shares his top five tips on how your mining business can control water management.

1. Do your research

It's important to spend time researching the right piping system rather than the cheapest option which may not always deliver the right results, e.g. pressured pipes vs. gravity-fed applications such as HDPE. Taking the time out to do thorough research will save time and provide a cost-effective solution in the long run.

2. Understand and evaluate your water wastage

Understanding where your water source is coming from and how it is being used is crucial to controlling your water management. Start by drawing a schematic diagram that shows inflows, sources of fresh and process water and how it's recycled. This will allow you to understand the situation and adopt the changes necessary.

Another important step is to understand the cost of water on both a financial and risk basis for current and future conditions. Consider how your operation impacts the environment and whether you could implement alternative methods to optimise water use and save time and money.

3. Educate employees

One way to achieve a more streamlined production is to ensure your employees are on the same page. Make sure employees can identify any practices that need to be rectified during your water management solution process, which in turn will also improve productivity.

It's important that employees are taught about the importance of controlling your water management and any processes being implemented which will allow you to do this more effectively.

4. Understand the benefits

For many mining applications, pumped water management systems are a necessity and the associated pipework must be capable of withstanding a specified internal pressure. However, towards the end of a mine's water cycle, pressured systems are still being specified when gravity pipes could provide a more economical solution.

Understand which piping system is going to provide the best solution and why. Once this is clear, you can be sure the investment will be worthwhile for your business now and in the future.

5. Investment

Pumps are one of the most expensive components on a mine site and even more costly if they are specified when they are not truly required.

Saving money and time are two important factors to consider when it comes to investing in pipes, therefore you should investigate whether your intended piping installation could operate successfully without the need for pumps just by investing in gravity-fed pipework systems.

High quality and high-density polyethylene (HDPE) twinwall pipes, designed for gravity application, offer a cost-effective solution reducing transport and labour costs, along with installation time.

To find out more about Polypipe, please visit: www.polypipe.com

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