

Performance sets pipe plugs apart

Trelleborg's new generation of inflatable pipe plugs has been a key factor in keeping the sewage and drainage infrastructure of one of western China's fast-growing cities in good order.

TEXT CHRIS HORTON



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hengdu, the capital of Sichuan province, is one of China's largest and most dynamic cities. Many consider it to be a showcase for the rapid development of China's once-impoverished western regions. One main area in which Chengdu has stood out from other cities in western China has been its ability to attract world-class companies to set up operations in industrial parks and satellite cities.

One of those satellite cities, Pi County, has become a hot spot for investment by electronics and high-tech manufacturers. Situated just northwest of Chengdu's urban core, this fast-developing city of nearly half a million people, with its world-class urban planning and high standard of infrastructure, is becoming home to a number of international companies.

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Zhang Linwu, director of Pi County's Drainage Facilities Administration Office, says the all-around reliability of the new generation of inflatable pipe plugs from Trelleborg Offshore & Construction has served Pi County well since early 2013. "We've been using Trelleborg pipe plugs for more than a year now, and we're very pleased with the results," Zhang says. "The pipe plugs were recommended to me by one of my peers, who said that Trelleborg's quality and service were both excellent. We were willing to give Trelleborg a try, and after using the company's products for a while, we found that they were really quite good."

Trelleborg's inflatable pipe plugs, which use Optimized Fiber Technology (OFT), have several features that set them apart from those of the competitors.

As with all of Trelleborg's products, safety and reliability are key. Trelleborg's OFT pipe plugs are manufactured by robots, which for end users translates to consistent quality.

BUT A REAL DIFFERENTIATOR for Trelleborg's OFT pipe plugs is their superior performance, another hallmark of Trelleborg products. During the development of its OFT pipe plugs, Trelleborg produced countless prototypes, which were tested relentlessly and optimized.

In the end, the pipe plugs, reinforced with aramid, a high-performance fiber used in military and aerospace applications, offered new levels of safety and operation.



Trelleborg's inflatable pipe plugs, which use Optimized Fiber Technology (OFT), are produced in Trelleborg's manufacturing facility in the Netherlands.

In addition, the lighter the pipe plug, the easier it is for a worker to handle and install them in tight manholes and pipes. Compared with traditional pipe plugs, which weigh 52 kilograms, Trelleborg's OFT pipe plugs weigh only 35 kilograms, a difference of more than 30 percent.

OFT pipe plugs also offer the advantage of flexibility. Their light weight makes them easier to compress, and tapered ends make installation in smaller sewage pipes much easier.

Zhang says he was impressed by the responsiveness of Trelleborg's China network. "All in all, everything's been very reliable. I personally feel the after-sales service and product quality are exceptional."

In China, private and public sector clients demand a high degree of service. Trelleborg's authorized China supplier has exceeded the level of support Pi County required. A crucial factor in developing customer loyalty and word-of-mouth branding in China.

The strong reputation that Trelleborg is building for itself in Pi County bodes well for its prospects in other areas of western China, where many cities are upgrading and expanding their infrastructure.

"If after-sales service and quality are maintained at the levels we've experienced, Trelleborg will likely see more demand for its products in this part of China," Zhang says. ■

PI COUNTY

With a rapidly growing population of more than 480,000, Pi County is riding the wave of economic development that has propelled the Chengdu metropolitan area into the upper tier of Chinese cities. The satellite city focuses on absorbing high-tech investment and supporting residential facilities for workers.

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INFORMATION
jacco.vonk
@trelleborg.com