

Aggregate Quarry Fights Wet-Belt Splicing Wearout with Abrasion-Resistant Alloy Fasteners

Mechanical conveyor-belt splicing usually suffers faster wearout and more frequent replacement where cargo is wet and abrasive. Bridgeport Stone, in Bridgeport, Texas, the flagship aggregate plant of Texas Industries Inc., has found a way to triple the life of problem splices, reducing net splice outlays by more than one-third and recouping much more in production time and maintenance manhours previously lost to resplicing.

Ranked among the country's 15 largest limestone mines, Bridgeport produces approximately 7 million tons of aggregate annually for road and building construction. Here, 82 belts from 24 to 54 inches wide average two bolted-plate splices each. Replacing a splice takes two workers two to three hours, depending on belt width.

Multiple washing gives Bridgeport a premium product, as cleaner stone bonds better with cement to make better concrete. Consequently, on most belts, loads are wet to the point of being a slurry.

"Wherever our belts carry wet material," says mining engineer/production coordinator Jennifer Hise, "the standard mild-steel belt fasteners that work so well on dry belts were wearing out more quickly. Resplicing was one of our biggest maintenance problems."

By visiting an industry trade show, Bridgeport people learned about Flexco bolted-plate belt fasteners made of MegAlloy, a proprietary alloy designed for high resistance to abrasion as a lower-cost alternative to stainless steel splices.

"Where we were resplicing three times a year, MegAlloy plates now last a full year," Hise reports. "They cost us about 85 percent more than standard steel plates, but they end up saving about 38 percent of what three sets of standard plates would cost over the same period. That savings gets even better when you consider the maintenance time avoided on the two splices we didn't have to install — probably worth at least \$240 to \$360 in labor — which now can be put to use elsewhere."

Less resplicing also improves productivity. Among the 12 belts within Bridgeport's concrete-aggregate plant alone, only three can be by-passed. Stopping any of the other nine stops that entire plant, so lengthy downtime can result in substantial loss of production and revenues. "So nobody argued against the price tradeoff of upgrading to MegAlloy," says Hise.

For more information, contact Flexco at (630) 971-0150.

— Provided by Flexco

Vermeer hosts regional rock drilling workshops to provide a local forum for communication and general education in the rapidly changing rock-drilling industry. Sessions have recently been held in Missouri, Ohio, North Carolina, Iowa and Texas, with additional sessions planned for later in the fall. For more information, call (614) 621-7691.



QUICK NEWS

Soundcoat, a manufacturer of noise and vibration control products engineered with a "quiet by design" approach for OEM markets, announces John Burke as the company's new CEO. Burke brings to Soundcoat more than 20 years of experience in the rubber and plastics industries globally.

Liddell Trailers is now the U.S. distributor for **Nicolas Heavy Hauling Trailers** of France. All equipment, parts and services are now available through Liddell, making it convenient for users to purchase trailers, parts and services at the local level.

Arrow Truck Sales, a leading preowned truck dealership, and **Transport International Pool**, a GE Capital company, have signed a consignment agreement enabling Arrow to assist TIP in selling its trailer equipment.