

Reusable drums for asbestos disposal in Switzerland

SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT FOR REMEX IN THE SUSTAINABLE REPLACEMENT OF BIG BAGS

Only a few landfills in Switzerland still accept untreated asbestos waste for landfilling, and mandatory treatment of the material is currently under discussion. Since 2019, REMEX Recycling AG, based in Basel, is already applying the process of binding asbestos into a concrete matrix. In the company's own asbestos solidification plant, the hazardous waste is processed into concrete blocks in accordance with the highest safety requirements so that it can be safely and retrievably disposed of in landfills.

Switzerland's largest accident insurer, SUVA, has a positive stance on the new approach to occupational safety



With the introduction of reusable drums this year, REMEX is launching a completely new method of transporting waste safely from construction sites to disposal companies. The drums hold around 30 l, can be stacked on pallets and are marked with a seal for transport. The Basel facility was modified accordingly to receive, store and clean the drums, which also helped optimise the overall process. „Our service is free of charge and works in the form of a deposit system. Customers receive the number of drums required for the remediation project. They deliver the filled drums to us and can take away cleaned, empty drums at the same time,“ explains Björn Brecht, who is in charge of the asbestos plant since May 2022.

Until now, common practice in other places has been to prepare waste containing asbestos in double airtight big bags for disposal. Once they arrive at the treatment plant, the big bags are cut open in the special remediation zone, emptied and also cleaned in the course of this process. Together with the combustible foreign matter that is sorted out during the treatment of the asbestos waste, the big bag material is classified as low asbestos content and sent for thermal recycling in the waste incineration plant.

The elimination of big bags not only reduces the amount of waste to be incinerated, but business partners also save on the cost of purchasing big bags and benefit from less injury-prone handling in the remediation zone of the construction site and simplified transport on pallets. REMEX Switzerland is pleased with the launch: „The new packaging method has been well received from the start, and we



The unique attribute of REMEX in Switzerland is its drums for asbestos removal

are seeing steady growth in the number of inquiries. Remediation companies are confirming the positive effects, and the issue of occupational safety in particular is convincing,“ concludes Oliver Mickley, Managing Director of REMEX Recycling AG, and adds: „We are convinced that in the future it will be impossible to envisage asbestos removal without the reusable drum.“

The reusable drum approach



Orderly and safe intake



Transport within the treatment facility via crane



Emptying the drum above the grate



Simple process-integrated cleaning of the drums



Securing the drums for transport and reuse



Potential savings of big bag material



One pallet with 20 drums corresponds to approx. two big bags

Advantages at a glance

- Reduction of injury risk, with no pointed or sharp edges as is the case with big bags
- Space-saving, orderly intake and handling of the drums by pallet stacking
- Reduction of waste volume and costs due to elimination of big bags
- Reuse of the drums after cleaning
- Deposit system for provision without additional costs for customers