

Industrial Solutions and Services

For the trade press

Amsterdam, September 25, 2006

Aquatech 2006

Siemens: Water resources are becoming a vital factor in the Netherlands – water reprocessing and circuit management boost competitiveness

Even in a country with as much water as the Netherlands, water is a frequent topic of discussion for local authorities and industry. “Water consumption, ever more stringent regulations and higher waste water charges are increasingly becoming a cost factor affecting the competitiveness of industry and commerce, and will put budgets under even more pressure”, forecast Christian Mehlberg, head of Siemens Water Technologies in the Netherlands, at the Aquatech exhibition. Europe already has the world’s highest water prices and in some countries costs for water and waste water are rising faster than inflation. “This trend is set to continue and will also put pressure on the competitiveness of businesses”. Mehlberg expects that in future local authorities and above all industry in the Netherlands will have to invest more than at present in water and waste water processing. Siemens offers solutions for this, in which efficient waste water treatment and closed water circuits in industry ensure sustained growth at the same time as protecting the environment.

With its wide range of process and automation solutions, Siemens believes it is well equipped to meet the various requirements in Europe. “Reprocessing and setting up closed water circuits in industry enables water resources to be used more efficiently, as well as combating rising waste water charges and fresh water costs, at the same time as complying with new legislation and regulations”, stressed Mehlberg.

With sales of over USD 1.9 billion, more than 1100 patents and over 200,000 installations worldwide, Siemens is now one of the largest suppliers of water and waste water treatment systems. “We see major opportunities for deploying our systems and solutions in industry, particularly in food and beverage production, in breweries, and in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries”, stressed Mehlberg. With our membrane, UV and chemical disinfection systems and biological procedures we can meet industry-specific demands for water quality in reprocessing. In combination with our product and process know-how and automation solutions we can help local authorities and industry manage their water resources better.

In the Netherlands, Siemens has geared itself to the emerging transition from a predominantly budget-oriented approach in water processing to consideration of costs throughout the lifecycle.

Current decentralized structures and differing technology standards need to be more closely aligned in order to achieve greater savings. At the same time, new alliances between suppliers are necessary to provide the water market with the best and most favorable solutions. As Mehlberg stressed: “This is the only way this transition can be successfully managed”. The trend from the current 40-percent proportion of surface water compared to groundwater to up to 80 percent in future will also make increasing demands on water reprocessing. “In future integrated management of drinking and process water will be vital in order to counter – in compliance with all prevailing laws and standards – rising waste water charges and fresh water costs and to exploit the available water capacities to the maximum,” argues Mehlberg.

The market for water technology in the Netherlands is worth around five billion euros, including systems maintenance. This does not take into account the cost of pipeline infrastructures. Annual average growth of 6.4 percent is forecast. In the process water market, the chemical and gas industries, power generation and the food sector alone account for around 1.3 billion euros (26%). Waste water treatment accounts for a large proportion of the Dutch water market, with a market volume of around 1.48 billion euros or almost 30 percent. The focus is on investment in plant, with a 67-percent share. This

includes planning the systems, installing the technology, electrical outfitting, maintenance and water management. The remainder is predominantly accounted for by construction work. "With our products and our process and automation solutions we are well positioned for this market and thanks to reprocessing and the creation of closed water circuits we can make more efficient use of water resources," says Mehlberg.

The efficient use of process water is of major importance in the food and beverage industry in particular. Treating process water so that it can be reused, together with professional energy management, play an important role here. Siemens Water Technologies offers a range of technologies and process scenarios for every specific situation. For example, the Wallace & Tiernan Barrier UV disinfection system is suitable for removing bacteria, viruses and germs which cannot or should not be removed using chemical disinfection. Systems for reverse osmosis remove up to 98% of all dissolved organic substances and over 95% of dissolved inorganic substances, and filter suspended matter larger than 0.05 micrometers. With the membrane bioreactor and its Memcor and Envirex product families, Siemens offers a combined system comprising filtering and biological decomposition processes that also treats waste water from the food and beverage industry energy-efficiently and at low cost.

Disposal of organic solids is especially important in local authority waste water treatment, in order to keep costs for landfill waste and environmental damage as low as possible. The Cannibal system from Siemens WT is an innovative system which can reduce the increasing volumes of sewage sludge as never before. In a patented procedure, solids are separated out by ultrafiltration and centrifugal force and are further compressed. The remaining waste is then treated further in a circuit process in bioreactors in a balanced aerobic and anaerobic environment.

An ever greater role for the future more efficient use of water reserves will be played by the seamless interplay of all elements in the water circuit thanks to process automation. Automation and control technology in conjunction with management and supervisory functions based on open industry standards ensure optimum distribution and regulate the need-based use of water. With its Siwa family of products and Simatic technology, Siemens, as the market leader in automation in the Netherlands, also offers

comprehensive industry solutions for the water industry, both for local authorities and for industry.

“In future we want to make it even clear to our customers that system integration is the key to a reliable and cost-effective water supply”, stressed Mehlberg. “We take care of the world’s water” is a future vision for Siemens, because water has been and will continue to be the source of well-being and progress in Europe.

Siemens Water Technologies delivers cost-effective, reliable water and wastewater treatment systems and services to municipal, industrial, commercial and institutional customers worldwide. The division “Water Technologies” is part of Siemens' **Industrial Solutions and Services Group (I&S)** which is a system and solution provider for industrial and infrastructure facilities and global service provider for the plant and projects business covering planning, installation, operation and the entire life cycle. In fiscal 2005 (to September 30) I&S employed a total of 31,700 people worldwide and achieved total sales of EUR 5.390 billion.

For more information and downloads, go to: <http://www.siemens.com/water>

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