

Business Opportunities

Convert powder into money

● Innovative soil stabiliser offers more than cost savings

BY HENDRI PELSER

Being able to use soil from a construction site, despite the poor quality, is an advantage.

The Canada-based AnyWay Solid Environmental Solutions is expanding and has created a joint venture in SA that will see many developers change the way they operate.

The secret lies in AnyWay's RBI grade 81 soil stabiliser. Matt Fischer, the vice-president says, "This product allows developers and contractors to modify a site's local soil instead of buying different types of soil."

This solution has been implemented internationally and is mainly used for road construction.

AnyWay has also embarked on a low cost housing pilot project in Westonaria, south of Johannesburg.

The soil stabiliser is sold in a powdered form and mixed in a way similar to cement. Stabiliser of between 2% and 5% of the soil's mass is added to create the required mixture and soil properties.

"The powder is a combination of natural and non-toxic ingredients that react with chemical substances in the soil. This creates a natural bond between soil particles," AnyWay's director, Jean du Plessis says.

The moment the powder makes contact with water,

“People doubt it because it's such a simple concept. They have to see the product in action and understand its durability.”

crystals start to grow. The different types of crystals transform the soil's properties by bonding various soil elements. The crystals develop at different speeds and continue growing and hardening for months afterwards. The smallest type of crystal is 0.2 microns or 0.0001 mm.

Because the product reacts with water, it can be used in wet and rainy conditions.

"In any engineering exercise, you need certain prescribed properties in the materials you use," Du Plessis explains.

Using AnyWay's product results in several cost and time saving factors:

- Soil does not have to be removed from, or transported to

a site;

- There is no need to dump poor quality soil;
- Fuel savings; and
- Time and manpower savings.

Du Plessis says one of their constraints is the simplicity of the product: "People doubt it because it's such a simple concept."

A fellow director, Linden Bradfield, says people often mistakenly compare soil stabiliser to cement. But, while the mixing process is similar, the end results differ.

Another hurdle the team faces is the bad reputation of earlier soil stabilisers such as liquid polymers, which did not always produce the intended results.

"People have to see the product in action and understand its durability," Fisher says.

"You have to show them that there is a good reason to use the product, and one of the reasons is to save money."

The powder costs R2.03 a kilogram and Bradfield says customers can save costs of between 10% and 40% on a road. "Even a 5% saving is massive for a project."

Bradfield says using their product to build access roads to a construction site is another cost saver. "You can include the access road in the overall design. You can also use it immediately, which is gold in the bank at any construction



Gold in the bank. . . AnyWay director Linden Bradfield with their soil stabiliser. Photo: Hendri Pelsler

site."

The powder was developed by a retired SA geologist several years ago, and AnyWay obtained the rights for the product. Fisher says significant development subsequently took place before the RBI-81 soil stabiliser entered the market eight years ago. The SA operation has been in business for a year and is based in Cape Town.

They are now expanding to Gauteng and hope to open a factory in the province as demand increases.

The Gauteng Economic Development Agency (Geda) has

also been involved in this process and has created several linkages with local municipalities for AnyWay to showcase its product.

The soil stabiliser can be bought from AnyWay or agents, but Bradfield says customers need expert advice first.

"We will visit on-site and create a specific solution, as well as train staff."

This is part of AnyWay's long-term sustainability drive and attempt to counter earlier perceptions created by earlier products.

● Visit www.anywaysolutions.com for more information.

Prior learning bursary tool for contact centres

BY KARIN FRANKEN

The Institute of Performance Technology (IPT) has launched a recognition of prior learning bursary tool for contact centre agents.

This tool will enable companies to access the Services Sector Education and Training Authority (SSETA) annual bursary fund.

There are two types of

bursaries, the first being skills programme bursaries and the other, full qualification bursaries.

This IPT developed tool recognises prior learning through assessing workers with extensive workplace experience for competency in unit standards and qualifications.

Participating companies can claim tax rebates from the government, boost their internal revenue, as well as develop

their workers' skills.

Mandy Venter, the chief executive officer of IPT, says companies can also use the bursary fund at no cost to themselves.

"Contact centres don't have the operational knowledge or the human resources capacity to administer the paperwork that is part of certification," Venter explains.

"We streamlined the process to free them of the burden by

having on-site co-ordinators and assessors to manage the procedure."

This qualification is open to anyone working in or wanting to enter the contact centre industry. It is also an entry into contact centre operations and management.

"Contact centre agents have had limited access to formal training. Our aim is to make a career in contact centre operations more attractive."

She adds that it will ensure greater staff retention and lower human resources costs for companies, as well as develop in-house staff.

IPT is a specialist human resource services provider for the corporate sector, and is the certification partner of the SSETA for the contact centre industry.

● For information on how to apply for bursaries, log on to www.ipt.org.za.