

TERMINAL QUALITY

Last year, Tampa, Florida-based E. A. Mariani Asphalt Company added a Heatec polymer-blending system to their terminal in Tampa, Florida. According to the company's president, George Mariani, Jr., the new equipment should help maintain the high level of quality that has become their hallmark over a period of 56 years.

The facility includes three 35,000-gal. (132,487-L) Heatec vertical tanks (shown in the photo to the right). Two of the vertical tanks are used for storing polymer and one for rubber. Inside each of the vertical tanks is a Heatec polymer-agitation system.

The control system of the Heatec polymer-blending system (photo at bottom left) includes fiber optics to prevent problems that might be caused by lightning strikes.

A 62-in. (157-cm) x 48-in. (122-cm) box dumper powered by a hydraulic unit is used to unload polymer into the hopper (photo at bottom center). A 150-cu.-ft. (4 m³) polymer hopper is connected via a 14-in. (36-cm) diameter x 30-ft., 2-in. (9-m) long screw conveyor to two 4,000-gal. (15,141-L) blending tanks.

The system is serviced by a Heatec helical-coil heater (photo at bottom right) with a combination Power Flame gas-oil burner, 3-in. (8-cm) diameter coil, 3-in. (8-cm) ceramic-fiber insulation on the shell, and 4-in. (10-cm) ceramic-fiber insulation on the head.



■ F A SIMPLE HANDSHAKE

is mortar that helps to build your company's reputation, then you know for sure that quality is of utmost importance. That is the case with E.A. Mariani Asphalt Company, Inc., according to the company's president, George Mariani, Jr. He said the people at his company never forget the standards that helped them grow to their current status: the leading supplier of asphalt emulsions in the state of Florida.

"We have prided ourselves since day one in our integrity and our quality," said Mariani. "Every one of our manufacturing runs is carefully and thoroughly tested. Every raw-material supply is tested. We do not sell anything that does not meet specification.

"We have always lived up to each contract and handshake that we ever had—even though handshakes are becoming fewer and further between in this business."

E.A. Mariani Asphalt has been around long enough to see many changes in the asphalt industry and the way that business is done. The company was founded in 1947 by Mariani's grandfather, Edward A. Mariani, an Italian who immigrated to the United States prior to World War I. During World War II, he served in northern Africa, and later in Italy, helping to build allied airfields.

Following the war, Edward took the skills gleaned during the war and acquired a license to make and sell asphalt emulsions in Florida.

"He became the first and original tenant of the Tampa Port Authority shortly after World War II," said Mariani. "We have since vacated that site, but today we still have an emulsion plant and our newest terminal located in Tampa."

Today, the company manufactures asphalt emulsion, asphalt cutback, and refined coal-tar products.

They have distribution facilities in Miami and Tampa, plus manufacturing facilities in five different cities: their Atlanta facility makes asphalt and coal-tar emulsions; at plants in Memphis, Dallas, and Greensboro, they produce coal-tar



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emulsions for pavement maintenance; and their Tampa plant—about 4 miles (6 km) from the terminal in Tampa—manufactures asphalt emulsions. The company recently added polymer-modified asphalt cement to their list of available products when they upgraded the production facilities at their Tampa terminal.

"We opened our liquid-AC terminal in Tampa in 1994," explained Mariani. "We rebuilt the dock and added 40,000 barrels of storage. And just last year, we added the polymer plant."

The polymer-blending equipment at E.A. Mariani Asphalt's Tampa terminal was manufactured and installed by Heatec. Some of the

FOR MORE INFORMATION

about Heatec's polymer-blending systems, call Tom Wilkey at Heatec:

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more visible features of this new polymer-blending system are three 35,000-gal. (132,487-L) vertical tanks for storing polymer and rubber; two 4,000-gal. (15,141-L) polymer-blending tanks; and a 150-cu.-ft. (4-m³) polymer hopper.

Mariani said that the quality of the Heatec equipment and service matched E.A. Mariani Asphalt's own standards for excellence.

"We were very impressed with the quality of the workmanship," said Mariani. "Early on, we did have some glitches that were basically the result of being on the starting end of a learning curve. The equipment was not totally familiar to us, and it took us a while to learn how to operate it properly. But all of our requests and inquiries to Heatec were promptly, adequately, and correctly responded to. In fact, Heatec's representatives made several trips down here to help us through that learning curve."

After gaining some experience with the manufacturing of polymer-modified asphalt, Mariani said the company's technicians have learned that, as with any of their products, research, time, and care are essential throughout the production process.

"Polymer blending is a science," Mariani said. "There is a lot of chemistry involved that will vary with the source and quality of the asphalt and the crude. It requires a very conscientious, extensive evaluation effort in the laboratory, and then a very conscientious quality-control program to make sure it meets specification.

"There are a number of folks out there that make the effort, and there are some who don't. People who are interested in doing it right will very quickly realize the importance of the process."

Mariani added that the quality of the equipment that they use to produce the polymer-modified asphalt is key to making the right kind of product.

"Heatec wasn't necessarily the cheapest equipment out there," Mariani said with emphasis. "But it was the right equipment." ▼▲▼