BEST PRACTICE

LOCATION:		**ARTICLE YEAR:**	2010
ACTIVITY:	Production and Processing	**COMPANY:**	Aggregate Industries
SUB ACTIVITY:	Asphalt & coated stone	**COMPANY LOCATION:**	Stoke Express Asphalt
BEST PRACTICE No:	BP735	**COMPANY TEL:**	01455 285200

TITLE

Bitumen pressure safety system

ARTICLE

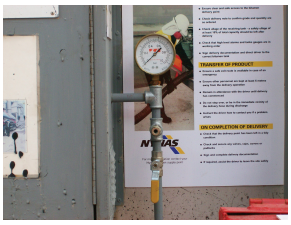
Description

A breaking news alert in March 2009 highlighted a situation where pressure had built up in a bitumen tank due to a blocked vent pipe. Following the alert, an automated warning system was installed to highlight if this issue should occur at this site.

Pressure gauges of 1bar max pressure were fitted via a 20mm bore steel pipe to a spare flange at the top of the bitumen tank. These have been mounted at the front of the tank where the driver can monitor them during a delivery. In addition, a pressure sensor has been fitted in the pipeline which is linked to the bitumen alarm system and is set to alarm at 0.75 bar. This will only be activated during normal deliveries if the vent pipe is blocked. A valve and a connector have been fitted to the pipework to test the system.

Testing of the system has been added to the plant preventative maintenance schedule and instruction on the system is given to delivery drivers on induction.

Benefits

The system gives a simple visual and audible warning if the vent pipe is blocked resulting in a pressure build-up in the bitumen tank. This enables the driver to stop the delivery, removing the potential risk to both the driver and other employees from hot bitumen escaping under pressure due to a blocked vent pipe.

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