WORLD-LEADING TRENCHLESS TECHNOLOGY

Hungarian construction specialist Agriapipe Kft has experienced dynamic development in the past 10 years and achieved a stable market position in the domestic and foreign markets. The company offers a wide selection of No-Dig utility system refurbishing solutions for a broad range of sectors and has up-to-date professional knowledge and expertise to implement such procedures. Edina Beale reports.

The Hungarian Agriapipe Kft specialises in No-Dig utility system refurbishing procedures in a wide range of sectors including water, gas, sewage and industrial networks. Using a variety of solutions the company is able to repair local faults of the piping system as well as renewing full piping sections.

Besides rehabilitations, Agriapipe is significantly involved in pipe inspection and pipe cleaning. Due to its specialist expertise, the company is able to provide support for service providers and construction planning/design companies. When implementing No-Dig procedures Agriapipe uses uniquely designed machines and equipment, therefore it is able to design and manufacture specialised equipment for this purpose. The Hungarian firm currently employs 40 people and has a steady annual turnover of €4–5 million.

No-Dig green utility construction technology

No-Dig technologies are also called trenchless technologies and they are used for pipe rehabilitation. The main advantage of this technology is that there is no need to dig a work hole at all, or at least only a very minimalistic one. As a result of this the operation is fast and environmentally friendly as dust, noise and air pollution is minimal, and the emission of greenhouse gases is 80–90 per cent lower than when using traditional construction technologies. For this reason No-Dig procedures are labelled as green utility construction technology. When using trenchless technology, specialist inner lining and inner pipes are installed inside of the pipes that are in need of repair and this inner pipe – similar to a new pipe construction – fully meets all specialised requirements. Its lifespan is equal to the lifespan of a brand new pipe.

Dynamic growth

Established as a family business in 2007, Agriapipe Kft was set up to solve problems in relation to piping systems, predominantly focusing on the No-Dig trenchless pipe reconstruction technologies which offer minimum excavation and surface disruption. In 2008 the firm introduced the Australian RibLoc Expanda, and this was followed in 2011 by the Japanese SPR technology. As these technologies were developed abroad and at that time they were not known in Hungary at all, it was a great challenge for the company to introduce these technologies in the domestic market.

From the beginning the strategic goal was to make Agriapipe Kft a competitive business both in Hungary and in the foreign markets. In line with this aim, in 2008 its technology was introduced in Yekaterinburg in cooperation with a Russian firm. Encouraged by the success of this venture, in 2010 another Hungarian-Kazakhstan joint venture was established in Kazakhstan, and this also led to the formation of another firm in 2016. An important part of this dynamic development was that all employees had extensive professional experience in the No-Dig pipe reconstruction technology. Another milestone in the company's history was in 2015 when Agriapipe merged with another Hungarian No-Dig specialist.

Unique problem-solving capabilities

In the years since its establishment Agriapipe has won several professional awards for completing outstanding projects and received professional prizes for its top technology and high quality service. The company's expertise and professionalism, however, are still frequently tested as each project requires unique problem solving. "The rehabilitation of ▷

industrial pipes with inner lining is still a challenging task for us as specialist technology and special use of material is required, while the operation must meet the strictest safety regulations and has to be carried out in short notice," explains Zoltán Varga, managing director of Agriapipe Kft. "Currently we are completing a rehabilitation project for MOL's damaged sewage system covering a length of several kilometres, but our partners include many other Hungarian chemical and energy companies."

Chemipipe is the company's joint venture in Kazakhstan, where currently a sewage system repair project is in progress. "The aim is to carry out utility reconstruction projects with the support of Agriapipe Kft, and later to establish and operate an independent No-Dig specialist company in the Kazakh market."

Another unique project in recent years involved a sewage system in Budapest. "Our company was asked to refurbish a sewage system under a railway line, plus an additional requirement was to lead across a telecommunication cable to the other side of the railway, which is an extremely expensive and long procedure," recalls Mr Varga. "We lined the pipes with the Soltaliner XTRA specialist hose system manufactured by Röders, while leaving extra space in the pipes to put in the cables. We are very proud of this project, as we are among the firsts in Europe to solve this kind of problem."

Exclusive Carbon Calculator software

According to Mr Varga, there are serious opportunities in the construction industry to reduce greenhouse gas emission. With No-Dig technologies the emission of greenhouse gases can be reduced by 80–90 per cent compared to traditional construction which requires the digging of open trenches for the work to be carried out. In the area of underground utility construction, alongside tutors from the Budapest University of Technology and Economics Agriapipe developed a unique 'Carbon Calculator'.

"In the very near future a free programme will be on our website which will help to compare the emissions of greenhouse gases for various utility construction projects," reveals Mr Varga. "We believe that no other similarly complex application is available at the moment. We hope that this software will encourage climate protection awareness and expect it to be used by strategic decision makers and construction technology specialists." □