Afinitas Alliance

Plant Optimization—Your Key to Sustained Success

Automated pipe plant

Afinitas has experienced technicians available to evaluate the operation and maintenance of your machinery. Our technicians are involved with pipe production in plants throughout the world and our plant evaluation process can result in large operating benefits for your plant. During the site visit we evaluate both your mechanical equipment and audit your production practices. Both areas are critical to the consistent and efficient production of quality products. We identify problem areas and provide suggestions for equipment enhancements, recommended parts inventory, and a wide range of other solutions. Additionally, we can personally assist your team to implement the suggested changes into your operation. Simple repairs are included in the visit.

Objectives of the Plant Optimization Process:

- Bring a focus on safety, quality, quantity, in that order of priority.
- Communicate the critical safety areas for all personnel.
- Evaluate your product quality and provide guidance for consistent assessments beyond typical specifications.
- Observe your operation and team in action using our audit tools to identify key areas of improvement.
- Provide a written report of the visit with recommended actions.

Plant Optimization Service Programs are currently offered for all production machinery lines, including: Atlantic, CAP, ePak, Kastmaster, Mastermatic, Multicast, PipePlus, PipePro and VUP. Site visits are suggested to occur at intervals, with a focus on different and specific areas at each visit.

Pipe testing

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The following machine and plant procedures will be evaluated:

MACHINE OPERATION: A time study of machine cycle times will be performed. The production step that paces output will be identified and recommendations will be made as to how to reduce the time of that step. Also, production operations will be monitored to determine if proper machine procedures are being used. This includes an overall focus on increasing machine output, while maintaining quality.

OFFBEAR/CRANE OPERATION: Crane cycle times often pace production. Evaluation of unnecessary motions, delays, or practices will be evaluated. Also, proper kiln organization for quick pickup of pallets and cages will be evaluated.

MACHINE STARTUP & SHUT DOWN: We will determine if there is an organized plan for daily machine startup and effective use of personnel to minimize machine startup time.

PRODUCT APPEARANCE/QUALITY: Production procedures relating to appearance and pipe quality will be evaluated, including deburring, patching, yarding practices, mix designs, machine procedures, and reinforcement.

REINFORCEMENT: Cage quality, flow of cages to the machine, and the existence of plant guidelines to ensure the fabrication of quality cages will be evaluated.

MIX DESIGN: Concrete mix will be evaluated for gradation, moisture content, sediment, and admixtures. Also, attention will be given to determine the existing plant procedures used to monitor mix as input materials change.

HANDLING OF CURED PRODUCT: Procedures used to tip out pipe will be evaluated with attention to safety, double handling, delays, and efficiency.

JOINT RING REMOVAL, HANDLING & CLEANING: Procedures and equipment used to remove joint rings will be evaluated as well as the proper rotation and use of personnel. Joint ring stacking, handling, storage, and transportation procedures will be evaluated. Cleaning procedures will be evaluated, including the effectiveness of the release agent. Special attention will be given to the cleaning of critical, but difficult to access areas.

CLEAN UP AT THE END OF SHIFT: Techniques used for the daily cleanup of the pipe machine and form equipment will be evaluated, including if certain key areas are being cleaned during the production day.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY & TEAMWORK: Machine and form equipment will be inspected to make sure guards and safety decals are in place. Production practices will also be observed, barriers to employee safety will be evaluated. Such barriers can include lack of training, communication, or organization.

PRODUCT CURING: We will evaluate your curing procedures and processes and make recommendations on how to improve your system.

PRODUCT TESTING: We will evaluate your testing equipment and procedures and make recommendations on how to test your products more effectively and efficiently.

VIBRATOR SYSTEM EVALUATION: We will evaluate your electric vibrator overload protection and overall vibrator maintenance.

REINFORCEMENT SPACERS: We will evaluate your spacers and spacer handling procedures, making sure they are positioned correctly and that the best spacer system is being used to hold your reinforcement during the pipe manufacturing process.

PERSONNEL TRAINING: We will evaluate your management, support, and operating personnel to determine the need for general or specific training.

Contact the Afinitas Service Team for a quote.

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