



Start Managing Your Water

The need for investment in Ireland's water supply infrastructure was worryingly highlighted in April last year with a cryptosporidium outbreak in Galway. Like many Irish cities, Galway has grown in population faster than its ageing treatment plants could handle – the problem was recently explained by Kevin Kernan, director general of Engineers Ireland who said: "Uniquely in Europe, Ireland relies on surface water for some 80 percent of our drinking water, and surface waters are vulnerable to contamination by cryptosporidium. We have a poor record in putting infrastructure in place ahead of development."

This outbreak has been bad news for the people who fell ill as a result, but has boosted the business of bottled water providers – and companies like EPS who have been involved in upgrading the systems. "We have recently provided an interim solution at Galway," says Tom Ruddy, Technical Director, "and we are presently constructing an UltraFiltration Water Treatment Plant for the adjacent town of Ennis, which has experienced the same problems as Galway. "Not too many other companies have the in-house capacity to address problems like this - we have a 5,000 square metre workshop and assembly area,

and 22 service and repair crews covering the country, so we can be on the spot quickly in any emergency and can deliver necessary projects, very often under demanding time constraints."

"EPS would be considered the market leader in Ireland as far as membrane technology for the treatment of wastewater, and with the completion of the Ennis project will hold that honour for water treatment as well. EPS has just carried out more than twelve MBR (membrane bioreactor) installations over the last few years; no other company has put in so many, and we have many more coming forward," says Tom Ruddy.

Ahead of the Market

According to Patrick Buckley, the Bison Division, a strategic business division with specific capabilities in the design, supply, installation, commissioning, operation and servicing of packaged treatment solutions, has continued to lead innovation in the treatment of wastewater in unsewered areas, and has been the first to introduce a number of packaged membrane treatment plants for hotel and housing developments in highly sensitive areas and special areas of conservation. "Without our solutions these developments would not have taken place,"

he says. "It would cost 30 to 40 percent more than the standard treatment solution, but that cost is coming down all the time."

The Bison division has a number of new products for this year, driven by EN 12566, a new EU certification for packaged treatment plants for up to 50 persons. Since 2002, Bison has provided wastewater solutions for more than 30,000 Irish homes. That figure is set to grow considerably in the coming years, as by June 2009 a new EU standard for the certification and testing of sewage treatment systems is to be enforced across all EU member states including Ireland. EPS Bison currently has two products available and tested to this new standard and will launch a third later this year, and these will comprise a very short list of systems in Ireland which are tested to this new mandatory Europe-wide standard.

Rainwater harvesting, wastewater re-use and rainwater attenuation are all areas of growth for the Bison Division of EPS, driven by changing economic, environmental and climate change concerns. With the future in mind EPS Bison has formed a number of strategic alliances with exclusive suppliers and partners to guarantee the delivery of innovative solutions for the Irish market and beyond.

Finally, there is a huge market in rural

EPS, the country's leading water treatment company, are well placed to lead the Water Treatment industry into an overhaul of Ireland's water treatment system following the cryptosporidium outbreak in Galway last year.

Ireland for the septic tank retrofit system that Bison launched last year. There are an estimated 450,000 old septic tanks in the country, and many of these are defective. EPS has a package, called Aquamax, available now for retrofitting and upgrading these systems, and is looking forward to developing this market over the coming years.

Current projects for the Contracts Division include the Ennis Water Treatment Plant, the partnered delivery with Enpure of the Sligo and Waterford Wastewater Treatment Plants, the Enniscrone Group Sewerage Schemes and the Kilbrin, Doneraile and Buttevant Group

Sewerage Schemes, as well as a variety of other schemes for the municipal and industrial markets.

The company is ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 certified and is in the process of acquiring ISO 18000 safety certification as well. As Managing Director Gerald Buckley emphasises: "Health and safety is an absolute driver in our company. The health and safety of our employees is of paramount importance as part of the drive towards growth and product development."

Part of EPS's strategy for staying ahead of the market is to make the best use of new

technology, which is why it already uses satellite technology for monitoring remote sites. It is able to control the site remotely, and has linked it into a VTN virtual network so it has extensive control of its systems. It is currently looking at handheld units for the service technicians, based on Bluetooth, for downloading and processing data and EPS is currently in the process of investigating an RFID solution for its stock control. This is because, apart from the material it uses itself, EPS is the largest wholesaler and stockist of pumps in the UK or Ireland, acting as an agent for the major global pump manufacturers.

EPS – MAKING IRELAND'S WATER GO ROUND

WATER HAS ITS cycle, and every aspect of its management is the concern of EPS Pumping & Treatment Systems, Ireland's leading water Treatment Company

EPS was founded some 38 years ago. The group has its new headquarters in Mallow Co Cork, and branches at Ballyhaunis Co Mayo; Mountrath Co Laois; Naas Co Kildare; Cookstown Co Tyrone and Enniskillen Co Fermanagh. It employs a total of 300 people.

The company comprises a number of separate divisions. The Contract Division is involved in the design, build and operation of water and wastewater pumping and treatment plants for county councils and industry. The Operations Division carries out the ongoing operation and maintenance of a variety of pumping, water and wastewater treatment plants. The Pumping Division supplies drinking water, surface water and sewage pumping solutions to the domestic, industrial and municipal sectors. Finally, the Bison Division is a strategic business division with specific capabilities in the design, supply, installation, commissioning, operation and servicing of packaged treatment solutions.

Multiple markets, multiple solutions

In addition to the main divisions, EPS has a number of subsidiary companies. A H Cullen is a dedicated water treatment company, EPS Environmental based in Cookstown delivers the services of the parent company to clients in Northern Ireland and Scotland for Scottish Water Solutions, and JF Andrews, located in Enniskillen, specialises in the supply and commissioning of power generating equipment and pumping solutions.

"EPS has a highly educated and skilled workforce, including engineers, scientists, project managers, designers, technicians, welders and fabricators as well as the accountants and marketing people," says Patrick Buckley. "With our network of offices, and projects across the country, our operations are dispersed, so as well as making life better for our staff in Mallow, the company has also invested in video conferencing at all its locations. This has saved a huge amount of travelling for weekly or monthly meetings and has been welcomed by all our staff. We have also been doing our bit here to reduce our carbon footprint."