



The Wasserverband Siegen-Wittgenstein: A good experience with Buderus pipes

Ductile cast iron pipes show their reliability over more than 190 kilometres

For more than 55 years now the Wasserverband Siegen-Wittgenstein (WVS) has been supplying the district of Siegen-Wittgenstein in North Rhine-Westphalia with high quality drinking water. What it uses to do this are principally two dams, the Obernau dam with a storage capacity of 14.9 million cubic metres and the Breitenbach dam with a storage capacity of 7.8 million cubic metres. In the district there are areas surrounding water extraction facilities in which certain types of soil use are restricted or prohibited by law and these cover around 34 square kilometres. 90% of them are forest or woodland with no permanent human population.

Elsewhere however there are 300,000 consumers and so that every one of them can obtain drinking water of excellent quality the WVS operates not only some quite small extraction facilities but also two large treatment plants in Hilchenbach-Altenbach and Netphen-Dreis-Tiefenbach, 24 high-level service reservoirs, 27 pressure-raising systems and a network of transporting pipes covering a total length of 306 kilometres. The treated drinking water is passed on to the towns and communities in the district of Siegen-Wittgenstein and to neighbouring municipalities in nearby Hesse and is distributed by these to the end customers.

Ductile ahead by a nose

Of the 306 kilometres of transporting pipes, the share that ductile cast iron pipes of nominal sizes from 100 mm to 600 mm have at the moment is 192 kilometres. That's 64%! For the good of its customers, the WVS is concerned in all respects with ensuring the very highest standards of safety and quality. The detectable substances contained in the water are well

below the permitted limiting and guideline levels laid down in the German drinking water regulations. Regular examinations by the government monitoring bodies prove the excellent quality of the drinking water.

The need for heavy investments is going to continue

"Buderus's ductile cast iron pipes are one of the most reliable ways of achieving one's aims", says Friedhelm Kleinblotekamp, Head of German Sales, "but in the course of tendering procedures for contracts placed by public bodies we are having to go over the same ground again and again to show what we can do. Over all the years that we have worked together, we have supplied the Wasserverband Siegen Wittgenstein with ductile cast iron pipes for drinking water of a variety of types starting with types with TYTON® joints and progressing through BRS® joints to BLS® joints."

The Siegen-Wittgenstein district is the most heavily forested and wooded in Germany and its most characteristic feature is the Rothaargebirge mountain range with its landscape typical of a relatively low mountain range. Because of the acid soils

that are frequently encountered, it has been predominantly pipelines with a cement mortar coating that have been asked for and used over the past few years.

"Pipe laying is usually done in open cuts", says Dirk Müller, CEO of WVS, "but in special cases the pipes have been laid without a trench by the horizontal directional drilling technique. We are expecting the need for heavy investments to continue in the future."

Drinking water supply and recreation in an area close at hand in harmony with one another

Although there are water protection areas all round the two dams, hikers, anglers and other enthusiasts intent on their favourite recreation will find nothing to stop them from enjoying themselves on the surrounding tracks and paths that have been specially laid out, because the WVS has, so far, refused to put up any barriers or hedges. For nature-lovers from further afield, the area around the two dams is a favourite destination for excursion trips. Looked at like this, the supply of drinking water and recreation without the need to travel too far have managed to achieve a peaceful co-existence.

