



## **Environmental responsibility at MEWA**

### **Resource conservation is top priority**

Wiesbaden, May 2019 - In managing to save up several million litres of fuel oil annually through heat recovery, and by largely covering our own energy needs by using contaminants that are washed out, we have demonstrated that working carefully with energy has long been a key consideration. For more than 30 years, resource conservation and environmental protection have assumed paramount importance in the business strategy of MEWA Textile-Management. Through its own technical developments, MEWA has played a pivotal role in continuously improving environmental technology in the sector.

MEWA provides a full-service industrial textile service to customers in industry, skilled trades and commerce across 21 European countries. 'We advise our customers on which textiles are suitable for their requirements, provide initial supplies and ensure that cleaning cloths, mats and clothing remain clean and well cared for. And this is all done with minimal consumption of fresh water and primary energy,' confirms Ulrich Schmidt, member of the management board of the MEWA Group. 'We are constantly dedicated to researching how we can achieve the best results in the most resource-friendly way, which means using as little energy, water and detergent as possible.'

### **Fresh water use halved**

Thanks to technical expertise and a special recovery system for rinsing and washing water, MEWA is able to save up to 50% of the water used in traditional washing processes. The so-called 'cascading system' filters reusable water from the final rinse cycle. It can then be recycled and used in further washes. Biodegradable detergents and additives are used for washing in the lowest dose possible. 'All our equipment operates using automatic process controls. We don't leave the composition and the quantity of detergent needed to achieve optimum cleaning to chance. We work with tested and well-documented empirical values,' explains Ulrich Schmidt. In comparison to traditional washing processes, that means up to 85% less stress on the environment.



### **Energy recovery from washed-out contaminants**

A multistage process which reclaims heat from the washers and dryers using heat exchangers is significantly reducing the amount of energy needed to heat water and operating areas. As a result, MEWA is able to save several million litres of fuel oil every year. Thermal recycling of the pollutants which are washed out – primarily waste oil from industrial cleaning cloths – means MEWA is covering up to 80% of the energy needs of the dryers and washers used to process the industrial cleaning cloths. The steam boilers needed for this are, for environmental reasons, equipped with high-temperature combustion chambers and flue-gas scrubbers. The exhaust air is discharged only once it has been thoroughly cleaned. Such thermal recycling of waste oil saves primary energy sources.

### **99.8% purity of recycled waste water**

In recycling waste water, MEWA achieves a purity degree of 99.8%, which exceeds legal requirements. Operation of the first waste water recycling plant designed in-house was commenced at MEWA in 1975. 'Investing in the environment is just as important as investing in expansion' is the motto of the company's management. The company's own technical expertise developed just as quickly and intensively. Most processing and environmental systems in the plants, such as washers, dryers, quality test benches, waste water plants and waste oil incinerators, are either developed in-house or come from well-known plant manufacturers and are further developed applying MEWA expertise.

### **Raw material recycling with industrial cleaning cloths**

At MEWA, sustainable and conscious business starts right with the manufacture of products. 'Our cleaning cloths are made of about 50% recycled yarn,' states Ulrich Schmidt. Even the lint produced during the weaving of the cleaning cloths is reused. It is gathered and processed into insulating material that is used in a range of applications, such as in automotive production. The company's services represent environmental protection practised on a daily basis – after all, MEWA cleaning cloths can be washed and reused up to 50 times. Paper towels or textile rag, on the other hand, land in the bin after just one use. 'If the MEWA cleaning cloths system didn't exist, and there were only single-use materials available, there would be a much bigger volume of dangerous waste.'



### **MEWA Textile-Management**

With offices in 45 locations, MEWA supplies companies throughout Europe with work clothing, protective clothing, cleaning cloths, oil-trapping mats and dust-control mats. In addition to the service, protective work wear articles under the brand name "World Wide Work by MEWA" can be ordered from a catalogue. Over 5,600 employees take care of around 188,000 customers in industry, commerce, skilled trades and catering. In 2018, the MEWA Group achieved a turnover of 704 million euros. Founded in 1908, MEWA is now a firm leader in the textile management sector. In November of 2013, MEWA was ranked amongst the top 3 in the category 'Germany's most sustainable products/services' for Germany's Sustainability Award. In 2016, the company was chosen as "Brand of the Century" by the "Deutsche Standards" publishing house, and 2015 it was nominated as "World Market Leader" for the second time.



**You Tube™** MEWA Textile-Management on film: [www.mewa-service.com/newsroom/all-videos/](http://www.mewa-service.com/newsroom/all-videos/)



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