

# we in europe

For esco – european salt company staff

## News: Three important contracts signed for esco Bernburg



The contractual parties EPG and esco are studying the contracts with intense concentration for the last time before signing them

**After years of negotiations, trendsetting signatures were provided on 28 October 2011 at the esco Headquarters, Hanover, which will fill, amongst other things, the order books of the brine field Bernburg until 2025.**

The *Solution Mining Agreement* between esco and Erdgasspeicher Peissen GmbH (EPG), a joint venture between Verbundnetz Gas Aktiengesellschaft and Gazprom Germania GmbH, covers the solution mining of up to six caverns suitable for storing natural gas for EPG in the brine field division

of EPG in Bernburg. “That corresponds to an order volume of around 90 million Euros, which will increase even more through price indexing,” comments delighted esco Managing Director Reinhard Dust.

esco has secured support from Solvay Chemicals GmbH (Solvay), Bernburg, to fulfil the accepted solution mining obligation vis-à-vis EPG. In the so-called *Brine Supply Agreement* Solvay and esco have set out that Solvay can and must accept a part of the brine extracted from the six caverns for EPG.

In addition to the six caverns to be created by esco within the scope of the Solution Mining Agreement, EPG has ordered another four caverns suitable for storing natural gas from Solvay. These caverns, which will be located in the Bernburg brine field division of Solvay, will be built by esco for Solvay. This service, as well as the solution mining of further caverns for Solvay and the related transport of the full brine to Solvay’s soda factory is regulated by the third agreement signed on that day, the *Operator Agreement*. This means that the old operator agreement from 1993 was superseded and an adjustment to today’s framework conditions could be accomplished.

“To achieve consent in all contractual details, we held long negotiations with all contractual parties,” summarises Dust. “The signing of these agreements is a great success to esco.”

*Bianca Schanklies*

## News from the sites:

### Pump station Bernburg in a new guise



Plant Management was pleased to put Mr. Wills' suggestion into practice and found a freelance façade painter in Ronny Claus (ClausBrothers Wandmalerei, Greppin), whose designs appealed immediately. While the work was still under way on the pump station, many cyclists stopped and expressed their delight about the new design of the façade.

*Jürgen Bunk*

While making preparations for the upcoming repair work on the pump station, Rainer Will from the Division Surface Technology of the Bernburg salt plant had the idea to dress it up with some colourful motives. The pump station, erected in 1967, is located outside of the factory premises along the very busy Saale bicycle trail.

### New jerseys for the Weferlingen Tanzkids from BL

On 28 September 2011 two colleagues from our rock salt mine Braunschweig-Lüneburg visited the Tanzkids (Dancing Kids) of the sports club in Weferlingen, Germany. Human Resources representative Astrid Schmidt-Hebbel and Works Council member Karin Hubrich didn't arrive empty-handed: They



### K+S CZ celebrates 20th company anniversary

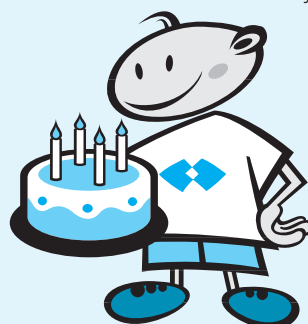
The history of this K+S platform company which handles, amongst other things, the salt market in the Czech Republic and Slovakia together with the esco colleagues in Hanover, has been a success story right from the start.

"With lots of commitment and creativity, but also with great reliability, the relatively small team in Prague, has successively built up the salt business, in particularly in the highly competitive de-icing salt market, and has sustainably raised the level of awareness of our esco products," praises Christian Winterhoff, Sales & Marketing de-icing salt products who is also responsible for export coordination. "With a comparatively small population, the Czech

Republic is, meanwhile, one of the biggest export markets for esco de-icing salt, but it also holds a top position in the speciality business."

The colleagues from Hanover pass on their heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the anniversary and look forward to a further successful collaboration with the highly motivated sales team at K+S CZ.

*Jürgen Bunk*



brought along new jerseys for the five to twelve year old kids, who immediately jumped for joy and tried on the bright red hoodie shirts.

The young sector of the club teaches the children to have fun with exercise, supports their coordination skills and hits the bulls eye with this: The number of registrations is constantly rising. Support from esco just before the first appearance in the shooting association clubhouse at Grasleben therefore came just in time.

*Bianca Schanklies*

## New scooptram (LDH) for BL brought into the mine



The hoped-for support for the extensive and demanding tasks in mining and headway haulage has arrived: the new scooptram which can transport 17 tons of salt in its scoop. The trial operation of this gigantic working machine – which is more than 13 meters long, weighs more than 58 tons and has a driving power of 320 kW – started at the beginning of December.

The transport of the LDH into the mine, which was disassembled into its individual parts, took more than one week because it could only be done outside of the running extraction operations, during the night shift. As the free shaft cross-section in our smallest rock salt mine measures just on two times two meters, special disassemblies, such as the transverse division of the scoop, were necessary. The re-assembly took about four weeks – it entailed about 100 kilograms of welding wire.

In the meantime, the vehicle has been re-assembled and its initial test run took place on 17 November. The new scooptram is the second of this magnitude at the Braunschweig-Lüneburg site, where three loaders with 12 tons scoop contents are also in operation.

*Jürgen Bunk*

## News from Dombasle

On 19 and 20 October 2011, the Salines Cérébos et de Bayonne in Dombasle welcomed approximately 300 local and regional visitors on the occasion of an Open Day. The factory confections the popular Cérébos table salt as well as further consumer products, the required salt is produced in the nearby saline of esco france.

In 1865, when SCB was founded as “Botta à Dombasle”, the company produced its own pan salt from a natural brine source below ground. In 1964, the site stopped salt production and has been concentrating on the conditioning and packaging of salt. Today, SCB processes some 35 thousand tons of salt into approximately 40 million units of consumer products per year.



In order to fulfill customer demands more flexibly and to also enable handling special packagings, the factory is presently being equipped with new machinery. In September, a new facility for Cérébos table salt shakers came on stream, with another one for different package sizes, e.g. dishwasher salt, to be installed by year's end.

*Bianca Schanklies*

## New series of events at the esco HQ



Approximately one year ago, on 10 December 2010, a new series of events started at the esco HQ, which was intended to familiarize all its members with the procedures and relationships within esco, as well as the whole K+S Group. Anyone can make subject recommendations for these lectures called “info@esco”, which also make a contribution towards the improvement of collaboration and communications and help to generate new ideas.

In the meantime, four events have taken place on the most diverse subjects,

the last one on November 4 with the supposedly dry subject of “Relevance of the article master data” which Nicole Redlich, Marketing & Sales Overseas, presented in the most lively and not at all boring fashion. She knew how to literally “tie in” the audience: At the end of the lecture, a ball of wool was passed around the audience and, upon uncoiling it, each employee explained in brief how the article master data are linked with one's own activity.

*Bianca Schanklies*

## How does ... ... de-icing salt actually work?

The fundamental principle of de-icing salt is based on lowering the freezing point through the created salt solution. To do this, the salt needs to absorb water, which it initially draws from ambient air, inherent moisture and the ice. Once a first quantity of brine has formed, the thawing process can run more rapidly. The brine works its way deeper and deeper and dilutes itself while so doing. If there is sufficient salt available, the roadway will be com-

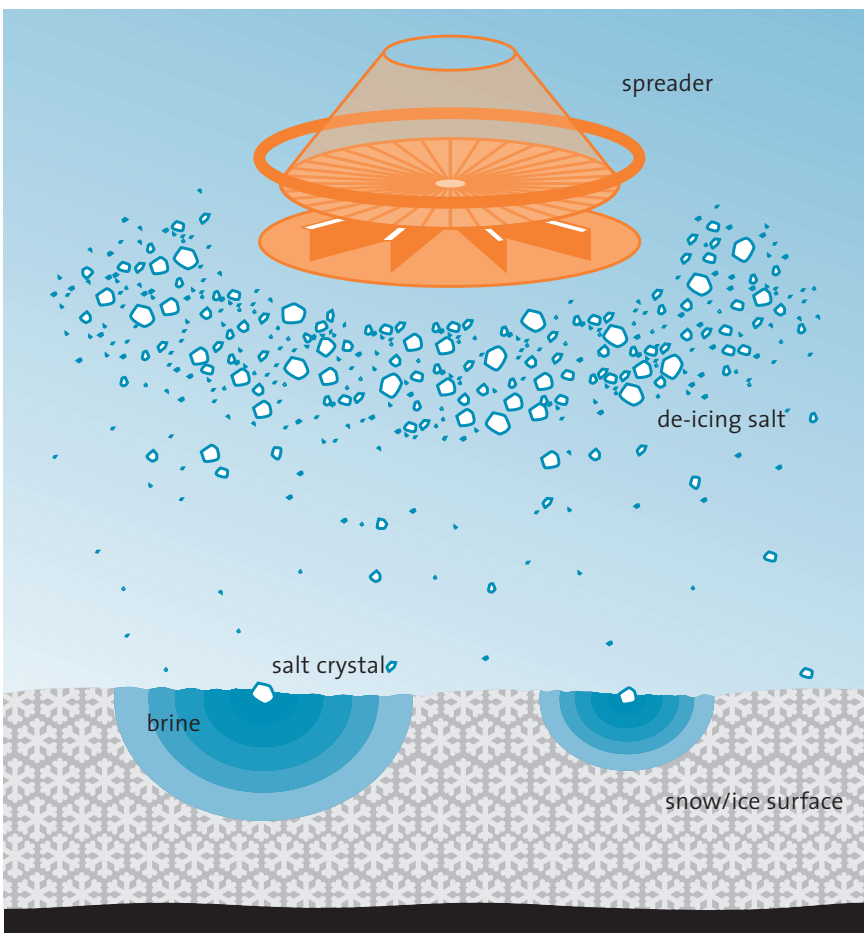
pletely moistened by the salt solution in the end and the ice is removed. This process naturally functions only in a certain temperature range. In dry cold (= very low humidity) the formation of brine and therefore the thawing process is, however, retarded/delayed.

That is why professional winter road maintenance providers in Germany and some other European states practice pre-wetted salt spreading where dry

de-icing salt, mixed with a brine solution, is applied. On the one hand, this provides the salt with the necessary moisture for forming brine, and on the other hand it achieves improved adherence of the gritting material to the icy road surface, which allows a more economical dosing.

esco de-icing salt is a particularly effective mixture of fine and crude salt crystals, as called for by the relevant guidelines. Whereas the fine crystals quickly start forming brine, thus looking after an immediate thaw effect, the cruder crystals work more slowly and therefore act for a longer period.

*Bianca Schanklies, Dirk Grube*



Thawing process of salt and pre-wetted salt

**A happy, healthy and prosperous new year to all esco colleagues!**

