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SPRING 2023



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Concrete Carbon Challenge and The Roadmap to Net Zero Concrete 2050

Robert Cumming MASC, P.Eng.
Head, Sustainability & Public Affairs,
Eastern Canada

Precast Producer: Lafarge Canada Inc.

We need concrete, and a lot of it, as housing is getting desperate. We need to decarbonize, and that, too, is getting desperate. With concrete representing 8% of the world's carbon emissions and its most required building material, how will we square this circle?

Where to begin? Let us start with where all the carbon in concrete comes from. It comes almost entirely from the production of clinker, the precursor to cement. Without getting too much into chemistry, to make clinker, you use fossil fuel-fired heat to split off the CO₂ molecule from calcium carbonate (“calcining”), from which the remaining calcium oxide reacts with other minerals to form clinker. There are two sources of CO₂: calcination (two-thirds) and the use of fossil

fuels to provide energy (one-third). This adds up to anywhere from 600 kg of CO₂ in every tonne of cement to 850 kg, depending on the plant. If you add carbon emissions from electricity, mobile equipment, delivery trucks, and other fuel use, you get close to the famous rule of thumb of one tonne of carbon emissions for every tonne of cement. The good news is that the industry is already moving towards net zero and has published a net zero strategy report on May 2nd, 2023. Here is a summary of the “Five Cs” strategy below:

The First C of Decarbonization is Clinker

We can use lower-carbon fuels to replace fossil fuels; we can be more energy efficient in the production of that clinker; we can use renewable electricity, and we can look for sources of calcium that do not calcine. The Canadian cement industry is already underway with these actions. Long-term research is underway to find new ways to produce clinker. As an aside, taking waste out of landfills and processing it into lower-carbon fuels has the side benefit of preventing landfill carbon emissions.

continued on page 2

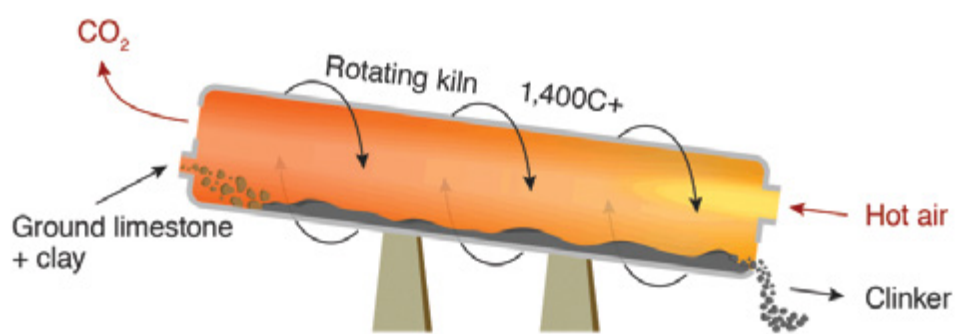


Fig.1 – Cement Clinker Manufacturing Process



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Concrete Carbon Challenge and The Roadmap to Net Zero Concrete 2050

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The Second C of Decarbonization is Cement

Cement, at its simplest, comes from adding gypsum and limestone to clinker and grinding it into a fine powder. We learned that if we grind finer, we could add up to 10% more limestone (i.e. less clinker in the mix) and produce the CSA-approved type GUL cement. Within the next few years, the production of Ordinary Portland Cement (GU) will cease as the industry responds to carbon pricing pressures. Delivery of cement to ready-mix and concrete product plants is a final component of this strategy, as is using data to improve logistics and eventually adopting newer transportation methods when they become available.

The Third C of Decarbonization is Concrete

We can use statistical controls to provide precisely the right amount of cement needed for the job, not a kilogram more. We can apply digital solutions to optimize product deliveries, including measures to reduce returned concrete. The innovative use of admixtures will certainly emerge as a solution here too. However, moving from recipe standards to performance standards will be the most significant gain. I liken today's specification approach to someone walking into an artisan bakery, asking for a chocolate cake, and handing the chef a recipe. Recipe specifications stifle innovation. This C also plays an important role in the well-established use of supplementary cementitious materials, such as slag, fly ash and many others. These strategies effectively reduce the amount of carbon-intensive clinker in concrete mixes while delivering a quality product.

The Fourth C is Construction

This is emerging as one of the more exciting decarbonization strategies. Architects, engineers, and designers have so many levers under their

control to reduce the amount of clinker, and therefore carbon, ultimately in their buildings. This could take the form of putting exactly the right amount of concrete strength where it is needed using computational structural design. It will require a new level of communication across multiple layers of the supply chain, from the cement maker to the architect. What will drive this is demand for net zero buildings and clean procurement, accompanied by strong governance to ensure authentic low-carbon products surface out of a greenwashed product sea.

The Fifth C is Carbonation and Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage (CCUS)

This is a fascinating time in the cement and concrete industries. An interesting and unexploited capability of concrete is the carbonation of CO₂. We estimate that 20% of the CO₂ released in making cement turns back into limestone over a building's lifetime. Notably, this is the opposite of the calcination reaction when making clinker. Many Canadian start-ups are exploring the mineralization of CO₂ into stone, sand and gravel products. Perhaps someday, concrete companies will mix negative carbon aggregates into their concrete, offsetting all the CO₂ emitted at the cement plant to deliver a zero-concrete product. We are not there yet, but keep an eye on this space. Capturing CO₂ for use in products or for geological storage is an active area of research, with the first cement plant CCS projects already in the pipeline.

Decarbonization pressures will drive innovation and renewal in the cement and concrete sector, and we're just getting started. Necessity is the mother of invention, after all.

Community Involvement: Fire Search & Rescue Team Tours Rinker (Ottawa) Production Facility

Producer: Rinker Materials

On November 22, 2022, members of the City of Ottawa Fire Fighter Trench, Collapse and Large Vehicle Rescue Teams visited the Rinker Materials production facility in Ottawa.

This rescue team provides the local Ottawa community with highly trained individuals who can provide search and rescue functions in the case of a trench, structure collapse and large vehicle incidents.

The tour's primary purpose was to provide the team members with hands-on practical knowledge of concrete pipes and precast concrete structures that are manufactured at the Rinker facility and supplied to local infrastructure projects. Although incidents on infrastructure projects are rare, the team sought to expand their understanding of the structures they could encounter on job sites.

Key discussion points during this plant tour were:

- Lifting hardware is used for both concrete pipes and precast structures.
- Standard components that make-up maintenance holes, such as ladder rungs, platforms, and hatches.

The rescue team was shown the structural capacity of reinforced concrete pipe and how it is designed to handle significant dead and live loading.

The team also witnessed a large diameter concrete pipe that was tested using the Three-Edge Bearing Test. This is a standard test used by concrete pipe manufacturers

to ensure the structural capacity of a given concrete pipe. As seen in Picture 1, the section of reinforced concrete pipe was taken beyond its design capacity to ultimate failure. Even at ultimate failure, the concrete pipe maintained its shape, even though significant structural cracks could be seen throughout the structure.

Discussions and demonstrations relating to the pin and bail system were a highlight of the tour. It was mentioned that large underground contractors are also very familiar with this system. Site contractors typically would be able to provide on-site support and lifting hardware in the event of an incident.

As an active community member, Rinker Materials was delighted to have the local rescue squads visit their Ottawa manufacturing facility and provide some technical knowledge relating to the use of lifting systems, and demonstrate the inherent structural capacity of concrete pipe and precast structures.

"The Ottawa Fire Services and Tech Rescue 47 D Platoon would like to thank Kevin, Jude, Joel, Serge, and the Rinker Team for their professionalism and hospitality in coordinating and providing us with a tour of the Rinker Concrete Facility. This tour was a great training opportunity for our technical rescue team. We were able to get all of our questions answered, and we came away with an understanding of the safety designs and practices utilized from manufacturing to installation of concrete and precast pipe in infrastructure projects throughout the City of Ottawa." Lt. Brad Bignucolo, Ottawa Fire Services.



Pic 1: Rescue team members discussing the use of lifting devices for concrete pipe and precast structures



Pic 2: Members of the City of Ottawa Fire Fighter Trench, Collapse and Large Vehicle Rescue Teams

Proform Designs and Produces Custom Precast Structures for Major Cinematic Production in Alberta

Alicia Demchuk

Marketing Coordinator

Proform Concrete Services & Proform Construction Products

Precast Producer: Proform Construction Products

In HBO's new hit series, *The Last of Us*, you probably noticed a key part of the set – the Quarantine Zone Wall with the word “WELCOME” written on it. That precast concrete wall was designed and manufactured by Proform Construction Products at our Calgary plant.

Proform was contacted by the art director in April 2021, when the series first announced it would be filming in Calgary and other parts of Alberta. They were looking for a way to replicate the Quarantine Zone wall that is featured in the video game and wanted a real concrete wall. “We will make you a real concrete wall!” boasted Randy Giberson, Manager of Engineering. The Art Director worked closely with us to ensure we understood the vision and requirements for the wall and could accommodate the director's final version. We were then provided concept drawings, which we converted into 3D images. The 3D image was an excellent resource for the art director and their team. They were able to incorporate the 3D image into their modelling system for the set as a whole.

The 3D image became our key component in creating the layout, the drawings for each precast concrete component, and all the additional pieces and connection details. We worked with the team of set designers at our plant during the fabrication stage to create the desired distressed look of the precast pieces. “We had to make the panels look beat up and old, which is a first for us,” said Rob Heemskerk, the COO of Proform. “It was fun working with the art director to come up with ways to make the panels look worn.” We incorporated different textures, such as adding aggregate, embedding and exposing rebar, and creating rough voids to make the wall look 20 years old. “The worse it looked, the better they liked it!” exclaimed Wes Woods, Plant Manager.

Not only was the look of the wall important, but so were the logistics for the installation, structural integrity, and safe interaction during filming.

We had to take into consideration how the wall would be supported on the ground. This wasn't meant to be a permanent structure, so we designed the supporting structure and many connections for easy assembly and disassembly. We prestressed the panels, allowing the walls to be six inches thick and 40 feet high, while still accommodating the need for actors and film crew to safely be on top of the wall for the required scenes in the show.



Completed wall and tower as seen in episode 1 & 2

After the production of the precast components was completed, the 3D image was used again to help us work with the installer's needs and the studio's needs during the erection process. We provided continuous engineering services to the installers, which allowed for decisions to be made quickly and on the fly to accommodate field conditions and virtually

eliminate delays. Choosing precast concrete allowed for the wall to go up in record time, so that the set artists could incorporate the final touches for the desired look for the wall.

When filming commenced, the wall system was designed for quick disassembly so it could be easily removed from the site and stored if required later.

Proform is very excited and honored to be part of *The Last of Us* series. Not only is this an incredible show, but we're proud to have our precast products be a part of Canadian cinematic history and featured in the largest TV production in Canada.



Installed precast structure



DECAST Provides Stormwater Storage Solution

Hagop Sarkissian, P.Eng.

Partner

Schaeffer & Associates Ltd.

Precast Producer: **DECAST Ltd.**

The Greater Toronto Area (GTA), which includes the City of Toronto, Regions of Peel, Halton, York, and Durham, continues to see significant year-over-year growth. From 2021 to 2022, the population grew to 6,313,000 at just under 1% (0.93%). Given this continued expansion of the GTA and its surrounding municipalities, developable land is becoming more costly, and solutions to maximize the use of every square meter are being implemented.

One of these solutions was used on a project in the municipality of Vaughan, which lies in the Region of York just north of the City of Toronto. The City of Vaughan approved a subdivision of townhouses (174 total units), but was challenged by the requirement of using a significant portion of land for a stormwater management pond.

DECAST worked with Schaeffer & Associates to propose an innovative solution that would provide the stormwater storage capacity without utilizing surface area aboveground, as would be the case for a typical stormwater management pond.

The solution was the use of a precast concrete I-STORM underground



Picture 2: I-STORM's ability to be installed in irregular shaped areas



Picture 1: I-STORM being installed

stormwater management structure. The I-STORM is a modular system that allows for various configurations. This was required due to the shape and constraints surrounding the site. Picture 2 shows how the I-STORM structure was configured to fit in the irregular area allocated for the stormwater management facility.

We met the municipality's stormwater management requirements with the I-STORM tank, which has an efficient void ratio that maximizes the volume available.

The I-STORM system was originally designed over 25 years ago in Japan to withstand earthquake loads by mechanically connecting all the precast components to form a single unified structure. The current I-STORM system produced and supplied by DECAST is designed as per the Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code (CHBDC) and can support parks, football fields, soccer pitches, parking lots and roadways. DECAST has done extensive testing and modeling to ensure that the service life of the I-STORM system exceeds 100 years.

The I-STORM is also designed with several access points, such as grates, maintenance holes and removable slabs that allow skid steers to be lowered into the structure to facilitate rapid inspection and maintenance.

DECAST provided Schaeffer & Associates with the required structural designs for the system. The design information included buoyancy calculations to ensure floatation would not be an issue. The benefit of this system is to provide the required stormwater capacity without utilizing precious land areas in the subdivision. In this example, the I-STORM storage structure was constructed underneath public parkland, complete with trails and benches for the local community use. Utilizing the same surface area for two functions is a major advantage of underground stormwater systems. By eliminating the stormwater management pond, community safety is improved by removing access to open pond water.

As the project was the first of its kind for the City of Vaughan, Schaeffer & Associates and DECAST worked diligently with our industry partners to ensure the stormwater management facility meets the city's requirements regarding safety, ease of maintenance and accessibility.

During the installation, DECAST supported the general contractor, including the installation requirements, logistical coordination, and discussions on the preferred equipment that should be utilized on-site (such as cranes, jigs and hand tools to make the crew's work more efficient).

I would like to thank the DECAST design, production, and logistical teams for their involvement in our project, as well as our partners at the City of Vaughan. Together, we implemented an innovative solution to address the infrastructure challenge.



Picture 3: View of the installed I-STORM interior

Coldstream Concrete Spans Monora Creek in Orangeville, Ontario

Brian Greck, P. Eng.
 Founder/Principal
Greck & Associates Ltd.

Precast Producer: Coldstream Concrete Ltd.

The Town of Orangeville, northwest of Toronto, was expanding one of its main arterial roads, Hansen Boulevard. As a part of this expansion, Hansen Boulevard would need to span the Monora Creek.

Greck and Associate Limited, together with Entuitive Consulting Engineers, specified a precast open bottom arch concrete culvert for the project. Coldstream Concrete proposed using an alternate precast rigid frame structure to meet the exact design objectives as the originally specified arch structure. Coldstream Concrete was also prepared to modify its production rate to meet the client's needs and schedule.



Installation of three-sided structure. Shim packs can be seen in footing keyway on RHS

Coldstream Concrete, in conjunction with L.S. Wong and Associates, provided the required design for the structure. The final precast structure was composed of 26 units with a span of 12.81 m and a rise of 2.76 m. Each of the elements weighed 39 metric tonnes. The total run length of the structure was 33.84 m. Coldstream Concrete's facility, located near Ilderton, Ontario, was able to manufacture each of the large 26 units in accordance with the requirements of OPSS 912 between August 10th and September 15th, 2022. This presented several challenges as the weather temperatures were up to the mid-30s (°C) before humidex during that time, and each unit required a four day moist cure immediately following fabrication. Internal temperature control of the 0.5 m to 0.7 m thick precast units was critical, requiring the internal temperature not to exceed 65°C during production and the moist curing period.

Coordination between Coldstream Concrete and the general contractor was critical for the installation. The structure was installed in four days – January 16 to January 20, 2023.

Given the availability of cold weather grouting products, the structure was completely installed in four days with no impact from January weather conditions.

As seen in the picture above, shim packs are used in the footing keyway to ensure each three-sided element is placed at the proper level and allow for a gap between the precast concrete culvert legs and the footings for the cold-weather grout to flow. Once all the pieces were placed, the keyway is filled with cold-weather grout, which flows under each leg and fills the keyway to lock in the structure.

The cold-weather grout does not require heating or hoarding, allowing the structure to be utilized for construction traffic the next day.

The use of a precast structure allowed for the project to be completed on time and have the bridge in use on schedule. Coldstream Concrete provided manufacturing expertise, engineering support and logistical coordination in helping to make this project a success.



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Les Lisk

Vice President

Renewable Resource Recovery Corporation

Precast Producer: Rainbow Concrete Industries

The recently completed Coniston Seniors housing complex located in the greater Sudbury area provides affordable housing to seniors in the local Coniston area. In addition, the 56,000-square-foot apartment complex is designed as a net zero energy building.

The project was designed by Sheena Sharp from Coolearth Architects, and the General Contractor was Ron Belanger Construction.

A key component of this project attaining a net zero energy target was the addition of an innovative heat recovery system that captures effluent heat by utilizing specialized reinforced concrete pipe. The technology for extracting and injecting heat into a wastewater line is called geo-exchange. The patented @Source-Energy Pipe consists of a heat exchanger encased in a concrete sewer pipe. The pipe and surrounding ground become a thermal battery. Rainbow Concrete, a local Sudbury concrete pipe and precast concrete producer, has been licensed by Renewable Resources Recovery Corp. to produce the specialized pipe in Ontario that allows for a heat recovery system to be utilized. Lafarge Pipe is also licensed to produce this pipe for the Prairie provinces.

Rainbow Concrete worked with Renewable Resource Recovery Corp. to develop a manufacturing process that ensures the specialized pipes meet the heat exchanges system pressure requirements and provide the structural capacity required to meet the live and dead loads that will be applied to the pipe once installed. The @Source-Energy Pipe meets both the D-Load and hydrostatic testing stipulated in CSA A257.

During cold weather, using a ground source heat pump, the @Source-Energy Pipe captures waste thermal energy from the sewage effluent and from the ground around the pipe. This is used to heat the building and provide hot water. During warm weather, heat is removed from the

building with the same heat pump and rejected with the effluent and stored in the wall of the pipe and the ground around it. Since the heat exchanger is embedded in the wall of the pipe, it does not come into contact with or handle any sewage.

Maintenance is only required for the heat pumps to control the system, distribute heat, or remove heat from the building. Because the heat recovery system is embedded within the pipe walls, a contiguous system can be developed along the entire sewage pipe system forming a district thermal energy system.

The installation of the concrete sewer pipe follows the traditional method. Providing proper bedding and compacting the backfill in



Installation of the specialized reinforced concrete pipe

200 mm lift as per the standard practices found in OPS for gravity pipe installations. Connecting/fusing the heat exchanger to a header and return line is accomplished using the same techniques as in a conventional geothermal installation.

Concordia University is monitoring this innovative heat recovery system with two Ph.D. students. The students have developed and implemented a data monitoring system that includes sensors, data acquisition systems and communications protocols. Once the data has been collected, it will be analyzed and evaluated. A final report will be produced that will provide information on system performance and recommendations regarding control strategies to improve system performance.

I would like to extend my thanks to Rainbow Concrete for helping produce a specialized reinforced concrete pipe with an embedded heat exchange coil that meets both the structural requirements as well providing a heat recovery component that has allowed for the Coniston Seniors apartment complex to reach a net zero energy rating.

For more information, please visit:

at-source-energy.com

rcil.com

lafarge.ca



Closeup of reinforced concrete pipe with integral heat exchanger encasement

Industry Announcement: L.S. Wong and Associates & Safe Roads Engineering Inc.



Sammy Wong, P.Eng., Ph.D.,
SRE Sr. Consulting Engineer (left),
Brent McIntosh, P.Eng., SRE President (right)

The consulting company L.S. Wong and Associates was recently acquired by Safe Roads Engineering Inc. (SRE), an engineering consulting company based in Aurora, ON. Dr. Sammy Wong, P.Eng., Ph.D., will continue his dedication to the precast concrete industry through his new role as a Senior Consulting Engineer with SRE.

Sammy has worked on numerous large-scale public projects involving precast concrete, and many precast manufacturers across Canada have benefitted from his professional experience. His active participation in Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code committee work has brought the benefits of precast concrete to the design community.

Sammy recognizes the challenges the precast industry faces, and his

Retained Engineering consulting model is welcomed by many producers and manufacturers. The service provides timely responses to production and design issues at a competitive price. The Retained Engineering model allows client access to Sammy's expertise in precast design and manufacturing, his guidance with the best production practices, and his knowledge of the latest changes in precast design requirements. He also provides mentoring and coaching to help build an energetic workforce.

SRE was founded in 2013 with the goal of improving roadside safety. The company has since expanded, offering structural, geo-structural, road design, bridge design, inspections, and transportation engineering services. SRE has performed projects for a multitude of clients across Canada, ranging in size from a simple inspection to full bridge replacements. The addition of Sammy Wong to SRE continues the company's goal of finding the best people in the engineering industry and providing them with the opportunity to thrive.

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