



## KOKHANOVSKY PIPE PLANT CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

**Beltrubplast Kokhanovsky Pipe Plant, the recognised leader in the Belarus plastic pipe industry, has celebrated its first Jubilee. Alexander V. Churkin, General Director of the plant, talks about its development, main achievements and future prospects.**

**– Mr. Churkin, your plant turned 10 in June. How did it all start, how did the plant grow, and what were the most memorable events in its development over the last 10 years?**

– Everything started in 2005 when the Beltrubplast Kokhanovsky Pipe Plant was founded at a small production shop for service pipes made of scrap. Three modern PE pipe extrusion lines were purchased for the production of 16 mm to 630 mm pipe. The plant rapidly grew into a producer of pipes for the water and gas industries and annual production output reached about 5000 tonnes in 2007. At that time however, the company economics were not satisfactory with relatively high processing costs, and an unclear sales strategy. The management of POLYPLASTIC Group took the decision to diversify production in June 2007. In autumn of that year we began production of PE-Steel transition fittings for gas pipelines. That was just the beginning. Next we set up a rotational molding production area and then a workshop for press-fittings for hot water and heating pipelines in 2009. Then in 2013, the compression fittings moulding workshop was created.

The plant today employs less people than in 2007, yet production output has grown almost 4 times since then.

The most memorable event was the opening of metal fittings production shop in 2009.

**– What achievements were the most significant over the last 10 years and what projects were most remarkable?**

– I think the most significant achievement was production of hydraulic tooling for POLYMERTEPLO Group. It is rather complicated mechanical engineering item of great quality. The most remarkable project undoubtedly is the production of press-fittings for hot water and heating supply pipes made by

POLYMERTEPLO. Its creation is a key element of modern metal works production.

**– What kind of products does the Plant produce today and who is your main consumer?**

– The products can be split in two groups. The first one is related to pipes: smooth, corrugated, as well as drainage with diameters up to 630 mm. This year we began producing spiral wound pipes with an inner diameter up to 2400 mm. All of these products are for the Belorussian market. Our consumers are in the housing and utility sectors or construction companies. Our second group of products consists of steel press-fittings for heating pipes, the hydraulic tooling for their installation, and various items made using rotational moulding such as trays, manholes, big diameter couplings, PE-steel transition fittings and compression fittings. This group of products are delivered to the Trade Houses of POLYPLASTIC Group.

**– Are plastic products in demand in the region and what is the situation on the plastic pipes market in Belarus?**

– Yes, plastic pipes are in demand in Belarus. I can recall a serious discussion about the completion of gas distribution networks developments back in 2007 and thinking that production of gas pipes would cease. However, consumption of plastic pipes, including gas pipes, is not going down.

The main player is STS BelPolyplastic, our Trade House. Its robust policy is focused on the wider deployment of innovative pipe products and the displacement of conventional materials, such as steel, concrete etc.

**– What place does the plant take in the Belarus market today?**

– It would not be correct to comment on the place of the plant in the market as our Trade House plays the main role in the supply of plastic pipes and related products.

**– The plant manufactures products that are in demand in both Belarus and via POLYPLASTIC Group in Russia. What are these products and what share do they represent?**

– The products made for POLYPLASTIC represent approximately 60% of total production. This includes press-fittings for hot water and heating supply making up 40%, rotational moulding products, and miscellaneous items such as PE-steel transition pieces, hydraulic tooling and compression fittings.

**– Did the Russian crisis have an impact on the market in Belarus?**

– Yes, it did and it was quite severe. The plant has been building production capacity for 10 years and there was some growth even in 2008–2009, however production volume went down for more than 25% for the first time as a result of the first half-year.

**– One of the success factors of POLYPLASTIC Group is continuous product development and the design and deployment of innovative products. Does Kokhanovsky plant take part in the design and implementation of these innovations?**

– It sure does. We always take an active role in this process and a number of innovative products of the Group are made here.

When POLYMERTEPLO developed and implemented new pipes, we developed new design fittings and hydraulic tooling for their installation and then started producing them. Together with the Group's Technical Development Department, we were the first to design and produce PE-Steel transition fittings. As part of the new project for modular manholes we produce trays and steel moulds for rotational moulding.

**– What goals and ambitions does the plant have today? Where do you see the plant in about 10 years?**

– Our present aim is to overcome the crisis, keep our highly qualified personnel, and maintain production levels. We also have plans for development including updating equipment and technology, production capacity growth and deployment of new products. We are quite optimistic about the future. The average age of our employees is under 40 so we have a lot to look forward and in about 10 years we will be a modern, robust and prosperous enterprise.

**PLASTIC PIPES magazine congratulates the staff of Beltrubplast Kokhanovsky Pipe Plant on its Jubilee. We wish all our friends good health, confidence, new achievements and personal wealth!**

Alexander Churkin shows new product samples from Kokhanovsky Pipe Plant Beltrubplast including SPIROLINE pipes, trays for module manholes and PE-steel transition fittings

