



**The Ultimate Solution**

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**19<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

## **LAFARGE BECOMES SOLE OWNER OF SAPPHIRE ENERGY RECOVERY**

Lafarge Cement UK and Michelin Tyre plc today announced their joint-venture, Sapphire Energy Recovery Ltd, has now become solely owned by Lafarge.

Set up in 2001, Sapphire offers a sustainable solution to the disposal of used tyres in the UK by providing them for use as a waste-derived fuel for the cement industry.

The decision to move Sapphire to sole ownership was made once the business had successfully achieved its objective of developing a healthy and viable end-of-life process for used tyres, by creating a sustainable market benefiting both tyre manufacturers and cement producers.

The EU Landfill Directive banned the disposal of whole tyres to landfill from July 2003 and shredded tyres from July 2006, meaning safe, alternative disposal methods needed to be found for the 40 million-plus used tyres removed from vehicles in the UK every year.

Incorporating tyres into the cement manufacturing process makes the most of the energy locked within them and reduces the amount of fossil fuels required - which in turn helps reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Tyres are processed in cement kilns at temperatures over 1,000°C, a heat that is sufficient to burn the organic molecules that make up the tyre and leave no waste residue. All the constituents of the tyre - including the steel that makes up approximately 20 per cent of every tyre - are combined in the cement.

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## **LAFARGE BECOMES SOLE OWNER...2**

Major investments have been made by Sapphire in developing reliable collection and processing capacity for used tyres in the UK, which now has a sustainable and competitive market for end of life tyres. Sapphire currently processes over 16 million tyres a year. Lafarge Cement alone consumed over 75,000 tonnes of waste tyres in 2008, compared to 29,000 in 2000.

“The decision for Lafarge Cement to take sole ownership of the Sapphire business made sense for both parties,” said Lafarge’s Jamie Randall. “We have both achieved the objectives which we had originally set, and are very pleased with the way Sapphire has established itself as the market leader with a commitment to serve its customers to a high standard.

“Lafarge is committed to increasing its use of waste-derived fuels and raw materials to help reduce consumption of non-renewable resources and cut down CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Taking full ownership of Sapphire is the latest stage of exciting developments in this area as we continue to investigate the potential of a wider number of waste streams, and build on our expertise in materials such as tyres, processed sewage pellets, meat and bone meal and solid and liquid recovered fuels.”

“The opportunity to reassess the joint-venture relationship also came at a good time for Michelin,” comments Jim Rickard, MD of Michelin Tyre plc. “Creating a viable end-of-life tyre recovery industry was an important priority for our business. We’re really proud that we have achieved that in what has been a healthy relationship with Lafarge, and we have no doubt that we will continue to work with Sapphire as one of its customers in the future.”

Sapphire Energy Recovery business has its headquarters in Staffordshire and employs 40 people at processing facilities and collection centres around the UK. It works alongside Lafarge Cement’s other resource recovery business, Glacier, which sources and develops the use of alternative raw materials and fuels other than tyres.

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