

Cool under pressure

Slough Heat & Power's new Bell loaders have been helping to improve uptime. **MRW** reports

■ IN AN ECONOMIC CLIMATE WHERE MACHINE RELIABILITY IS EVERYTHING, DOWNTIME DUE

to unscheduled maintenance is something every plant operator wants to avoid. This issue is especially acute in the waste and recycling industry, where loading shovels operating in partially enclosed spaces are continually exposed to the harshest of environments.

Slough Heat & Power, a subsidiary of Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE), has tackled this problem head-on and is now reaping the benefits.

A little over a year ago, the Slough plant replaced its three L120E Volvo wheeled loaders with three L1806E loaders from Bell Equipment. The decision to switch suppliers followed extensive demonstrations on both its woodchip and waste-derived fuel (WDF) processing sites, and included the full involvement of machine operators in the decision-making process.

SSE national fuel manager (waste and biomass) John Watson says: "Prior to the Volvos, we'd tried JCB and Komatsu. The Bell machines proved to be much better at working in our environment than any other machine on the market."

Slough Heat & Power operates one loader in each of its two fuel stores 24 hours a day. The three machines are rotated equally across shifts on a weekly basis, with the third loader acting as a spare to ensure the operation never grinds to a halt.

This back-up is essential in the type of operation run by Slough Heat & Power. The WDF plant, for example, which involves the handling of large volumes of shredded paper, card and plastics in a large store, is no friend to machinery. The handling associated with this type of waste fuel, combined with the efficient mist air dust suppression systems installed, create a moist dust which easily clogs up cooling systems. This is also experienced in the woodchip processing plant on the opposite side of the site.

"There are few harsher conditions that a wheeled loader can operate in," says Watson.

The main reason why the wheeled loaders have proven so ideal in a waste-related environments is due to the QuadCool cooling system, which comes as standard across the entire seven-strong range of Bell loaders. QuadCool places the wide-core radiator, transmission, axle, hydraulic and air-to-air coolers in a



Bell loaders have proved themselves in dusty environments

AT A GLANCE

How Bell's wheeled loaders are standing up to the harsh working environment of a site that handles woodchip and waste-derived fuel

separate compartment to the engine. The individual mounting of wide-core radiators on the range eliminates debris collection in between radiators.

With the E-Series loaders, steel access panels have fine mesh screens to filter cooling air as it enters the QuadCool system. The screen's holes are substantially smaller than the wide-core radiators, so any debris drawn in passes straight through the system, thus extending intervals between cleaning – and increasing working time. The fins per square inch on the radiators also greatly reduce the chance of debris build up.

Included as standard in QuadCool is the automatic reversing fan, which reverses air flow for 30 seconds at intervals determined by the operator, depending on the site conditions. This blows any accumulated debris away from the radiators, maintaining cooling efficiency and increasing productive times by further reducing the need for cleaning.

In addition to the QuadCool system, Slough Heat & Power was also insistent on a higher-than-average specification on all aspects of the machines, paying attention to operations safety.

Bell's waste-spec loaders come with belly guards, cab screen guards, solid rubber tyres, high-lift arms and high-tip buckets. The arms, which can comfortably load high-sided trucks and hoppers also have quick-hitch attachments to enable the swift changing of buckets for materials of different weight and compaction.

Bell Equipment UK sales support manager Carl Woollaston says: "Not only are we confident that our wheeled loaders will beat any other manufacturer in a waste environment, but our customers are also telling a similar story." ■

→ Bell Equipment UK will be exhibiting its wheeled loaders at the RWM exhibition in Birmingham NEC on 13-15 September. The company can be found in the outdoor exhibition area at stand OA187

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