

MOBILE MIXING SOLVES A SERIOUS CONCRETE SUPPLY PROBLEM FOR THE CITY OF BAYTOWN



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Rather than wait three to four weeks for concrete deliveries, Kevin Harvill, assistant director of public works for the City of Baytown, Texas, took matters into his own hands. Literally. He convinced the city to invest in Cemen Tech mobile mixing equipment. According to Kevin, on-site volumetric mixing is the only way for municipalities like Baytown to go.

What caused the delays in getting concrete for your projects?

Houston's construction scene is booming, and demand for concrete exceeds the supply. Most ready mix plants focus on large loads, making it difficult for us to get the short loads we need on a timely basis. As a result, we had to wait three to four weeks for concrete. That not only cost us time, but the up charges for short loads cost us money.

What options did the City of Baytown have to meet its need for concrete?

With a limited number of ready-mix plants in the area, the only option available was for the city to take control of the situation and mix its own concrete. We did our research and learned that mobile volumetric mixing of concrete was a viable option for short loads. Although I had worked with volumetric mixing at the City of Dallas, the concept was totally new to Baytown, so the biggest challenge I had was convincing management to invest in the equipment I had specified — a Cemen Tech MCD10-100 mobile mixing unit.

How does management feel about their investment in mobile concrete mixing equipment today?

They are sold on volumetric mixing of concrete, and the numbers prove it. We paid for the vehicle and silo in 18 months, and that doesn't factor in soft costs such as the elimination of downtime waiting for concrete. I am hopeful that management's acceptance of this more efficient way to meet our concrete needs will help them justify the purchase of another Cemen Tech mobile unit in 2018.

Beyond the financial advantages, what other benefits has the City of Baytown realized from switching to mobile mixing?

Let's start with improved productivity. We are now in control of our concrete, so we can pour as early as 7:30 a.m., clean up, return for another load and be on another job site later that same morning. Beyond that, the Cemen Tech equipment gives us the ability to control the mix, quality and strength of the concrete at the job. For example, we can quickly adjust the slump, add mixture and water reducer to pour everything from sidewalks to curbs using the same truck! Another benefit of volumetric mixing is meeting tax payer's expectations to have streets available for travel with minimal delays.



What about the time it took for your crew to be comfortable operating the equipment?

Not only is the Cemen Tech equipment designed for ease of operation, but the company also did an excellent job training the crew on site. From my experience, the real key in making the most of the equipment is to have an operator who takes personal “ownership” of the unit, making certain it is well maintained and always ready for use. We are fortunate to have such an operator at the City of Baytown.

Any regrets about switching from relying on ready-mix plants to using mobile mixing?

None at all. We are better able to meet our weekly demand for concrete, typically pouring three times a week. Having spent more than 25 years working with municipalities, this is definitely the way to go for municipalities like the City of Baytown, especially when you consider traffic volume and congestion. I am constantly sharing our success story with my peers in other cities. Matter of fact, the City of LaPorte, Texas, asked me about our setup, and I convinced them to purchase a Cemen Tech mobile mixer. It’s an easy sell!

CITY OF BAYTOWN: AT A GLANCE

LOCATION	30 miles east of Houston, Texas
CREW SIZE	4 to 5 people on concrete crew
EQUIPMENT	Cemen Tech MC 10-100 Mobile (purchased in 2012)
YARDS POURED PER YEAR	1,500 yards
TYPES OF PROJECT	Sidewalks, streets, curbs and other typical municipality projects