eurobitume

Recommendation on Ground-Based Operations



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Established in 1969, Eurobitume is the voice of the bitumen industry in Europe. Bringing together producers, marketers, users, hauliers, etc, the association's purpose is to develop and promote the safe, sustainable and efficient use of bitumen in road, industrial and building applications.

Through its network of experts, Eurobitume develops guidance, contributes to regulatory and technical discussions, and supports the continuous improvement of industry standards across Europe.

Representing its members, Eurobitume combines industry expertise and insight to support dialogue with policymakers and engagement across the entire bitumen value chain. It promotes best practices in health, safety, environmental stewardship and technical excellence, while communicating the value and benefits of bitumen through credible, evidence-based information.

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Eurobitume's Position:

Ensuring the safe handling and delivery of bitumen is a shared responsibility across the supply chain. Hauliers, bitumen suppliers, customers, equipment manufacturers and public authorities all have an important role to play in creating the conditions required for safer operations.

One of the most effective ways to reduce risks during discharge is to carry out operations from ground level whenever feasible. Ground-based venting and remote operating systems can help avoid the need to climb onto vehicles or work close to openings, thereby reducing exposure to fumes, the risk of falls and other incidents during delivery.

The transition to ground-based operations depends on the organisations responsible for:

- investing in appropriately equipped trailers and vehicles;
- designing or adapting delivery points;
- establishing contractual and operational requirements;
- manufacturing equipment that enables ground-based and remote operations; and
- developing local rules and frameworks that support safer practices.

This includes the drivers being trained in the use of the ground venting systems, and being made aware of the relevance of using them – and not climbing on the truck.

Practical experience, for example from joint industry initiatives towards equipping all bitumen trucks with ground venting facilities, demonstrates how coordinated action across the supply chain can help make these safer practices operational. Such examples can provide valuable insight into the opportunities, practical considerations and good practices associated with this transition.

Eurobitume, the European Bitumen Association, strongly promotes ground-based operations. Through its Safe Handling of Bitumen Sub-Committee, Eurobitume has developed practical guidance to help organisations assess and implement safer working arrangements.

The following resources are publicly available:

- Guidance on ground-based operations, available in several languages.
- A recording of the webinar on ground-based operations and the safe delivery of bitumen (available in English only).
- A new animation illustrating the key principles of safe ground-based operations, available here.

We encourage your organisation to explore these resources and support the transition to ground-based and remote operations. We would also appreciate your support in sharing this information with the relevant teams and partners within your network. Additional Eurobitume resources are available on our website.

Should you wish to discuss the topic or require further information, please contact Dr Anja Sörensen, HSE Lead at Eurobitume. Her contact details are available here.

Let's all remember: safety is not something we compete on; it is something we advance together.