

OVERVIEW

Imerys Minerals is an international mineral producer with a commitment to:

- Achieving a least cost pallet strategy.
- Developing an effective pallet collection scheme.
- Exploring possibilities of using reconditioned pallets rather than new pallets.
- Improving environmental credentials by reducing reliance on new timber.

CHALLENGE

Imerys Minerals operates from two UK production sites, Beverley and Par, to pack and supply mineral-based specialties to both domestic and overseas customers. Historically only new pallets were purchased but with continuing hikes in timber pricing the Business set the challenge to reduce pallet spend by combining the benefits of collecting used pallets from customers and substituting, where practical, new pallets with reconditioned.

SOLUTION

Imerys Minerals engaged the services of RPS to look at new avenues for reducing pallet costs including pallet collections from customers.

The initial step was to review the existing pallet strategy with a view to reducing costs while maintaining supply chain performance. The Par site specifies a two way square pallet for both

25kg sacks and 1000kg big bags while Beverley use a single standard four way specification to carry the same pack types.

The dimensional uniqueness of the Par pallet restricted re-conditioned alternatives. Instead pallet collections from customers became the best cost option. RPS established a logistical network for the national collection of pallets. The complete pallet collection process including sorting, inspection, repair where necessary and return to site is fully managed by RPS, therefore Imerys can concentrate their time effectively to their core business.

For the Beverley site RPS introduced an equivalent reconditioned pallet with sufficient robustness to carry a 1000kg payload of 25kg sacks and a second reconditioned square pallet manufactured for carrying 1000kg big bags. This latter pallet also offered the added benefit of improving vehicle payload to help reduce overall distribution costs.



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CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

“Since 2008 RPS has collected Imerys pallets from our customers across the UK and Ireland. With a simple but effective process the pallets are refurbished to full working order so that RPS can return the pallets to Imerys ready to be reused. RPS delivers regular pallet loads on time, in full. They also ensure that our pallet requirements are met each week in order for us to proficiently supply our customers.”

SS, Sales & Operations Manager

RESULTS

- Replaced 20,000 new pallets with reconditioned pallets at Beverley.
- Collected 5,000 Par pallets for reuse.
- Achieved a 25% reduction in overall pallet spend.
- Wood waste obligation reduced by 450te.
- Transport efficiencies gained with the introduction of the square pallets at Beverley.