

Sulfacid™ Plant

A new R65 million Sulfacid™ plant to clean exhaust gases produced by the concentrate smelting furnaces has been constructed at Impala Platinum's Rustenburg operations. The plant, which was commissioned in October 2002, has significantly reduced the quantity of sulphur dioxide gas emissions. This is an integral aspect of Impala Platinum's air quality management programme that is aimed at reducing the volume of airborne pollutants.

Technology

After an in-depth review of the extensive research that has been conducted worldwide into sulphur removal processes, the most efficient and sustainable was found to be that used by the paint pigment industry in Europe. Impala Platinum management found that this technology was suitable for cleaning furnace off-gas.

The technology selected for the new plant, a Lurgi Metallurgie process, collects up to 80% of the electric smelter sulphur dioxide gas produced by means of activated carbon and water spray systems that convert the sulphur dioxide emissions to sulphuric acid. As a result, the total volume of sulphur dioxide emissions from the smelter gas at Mineral Processes has more than halved.

Advantages

The new Sulfacid™ plant is based on a simple, cost-effective technology. Its main advantages are:

- Reduced sulphur dioxide emissions – the new plant, which collects most of the sulphur dioxide contained in the furnace gas, uses this to produce weak, diluted sulphuric acid. This is in turn sold to chemical producers for the production of fertilizers.
- Reduced ambient sulphur dioxide levels that are within the limits set by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Plans are in hand to develop the plant further and to continue reducing sulphur dioxide emissions.

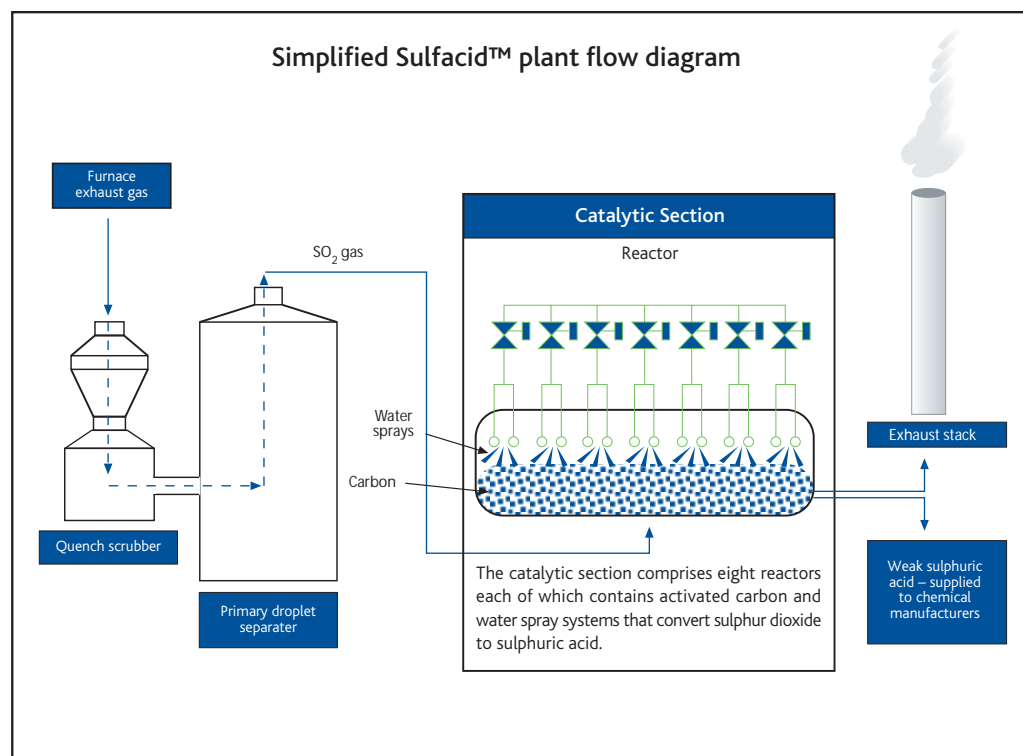
The Sulfacid™ plant, constructed and commissioned at a cost of R65 million, is an integral aspect of Impala Platinum's air quality management programme





Implats CEO Keith Rumble and the Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Water, Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi, at the opening of the Sulfacid™ Plant on 12 June 2003

The internationally proven Sulfacid™ technology on which the new plant at Impala Platinum is based, uses the low strength sulphur dioxide gas (less than 1%) from the Mineral Processes furnaces to produce weak sulphuric acid. The new acid plant complements the existing traditional sulphuric acid plant and together these ensure that Mineral Processes emits less than 20 tonnes of sulphur dioxide into the atmosphere daily, which is in line with limits set out by the provincial Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment.



Contact details

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