

■ Schlüsselbauer Technology GmbH & Co KG, 4673 Gaspoltshofen, Austria

# Economical production of manhole bases at Matériaux Pitois in France

In the 3000-habitants-village with the melodic name Champagné in the province Pays de la Loire, eastern of Le Mans, Jean-Claude Pitois has been manufacturing in his family business manhole bases made of concrete with the „Perfect“ production system of the Austrian company

Schlüsselbauer Technology GmbH & Co KG for one year. He can now meet the demand for manhole bases of improved quality on the French market and at the same time he improves the working conditions for his own employees and the labour on the manhole building site.

Matériaux Pitois was founded in 1945, and since 1976 Jean-Claude Pitois has been working in this family business. The workshop at the location Champagné was taken over in 1980. In 1998 Matériaux Pitois in Champagné started with the production of manhole risers and tapers and since 2003 also fibre-reinforced concrete has been used for the production of pipes.

The family Pitois has always been among the pioneers of manufacturing precast concrete products and this initiative has always been rewarded so far. Also in case of the newly equipped manufacturing site for concrete manhole bases. The first months with the manufacturing system „Perfect“ already confirm that the strate-

gic and long-term business objectives adjusted decision to serve the market with solid concrete manhole bases is a worthwhile one. Matériaux Pitois therefore abides by its strategic alignment – a small company which locally enlarges its position in the market with extraordinary products.

## **Requirements of the market: flexibility and improved quality**

Until now plastics were often used for the coating of the channel or even for the manufacturing of complete manholes. Besides a couple of advantages like the easier handling or the required homogeneous surface quality with channels

and pipe connection also a series of disadvantages arose. In addition to problems with capacity in the field of road construction or with the increased demand of manholes in case of flood particularly there is a shortage of precast channels. Furthermore the manufacturer has considerably higher costs than for conventional concrete manholes without gaining a higher market price. The margin for the manhole manufacturers correspondingly decreases.

Therefore Matériaux Pitois invested in the new „Perfect“-technology from Schlüsselbauer to meet the increasing requirements of quality and profitability of manhole bases. The aim of this investment should be a clear push for innovation concerning



**PERFECT - The industrial production system for manhole bases:  
Individual | Monolithic | In one pour | Available within 24 hours!**

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Jean-Claude Pitois: „Perfect delivers a completely finished product to the customer!”

quality of manhole risers – and the simultaneous reduction of delivery times.

Particularly the monolithic structure of the whole prefabricated part as well as the surface free from pores and shrink holes were the decisive advantages for Matériaux Pitois with which an extended

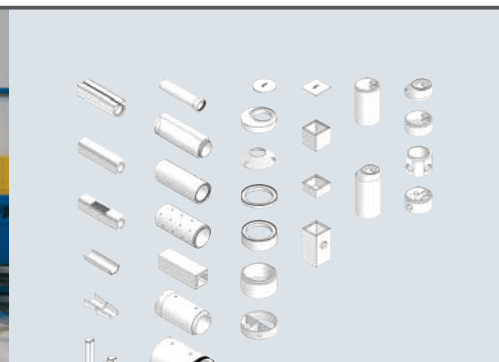
product lifetime and finally an extension of the own market position should be achieved. Moreover the possibility to connect each kind of pipe (concrete, cast iron, plastic) in optional quantity and incline with the manhole base equally met the requirements of Matériaux Pitois and also resulted in joint development of a sealing integrated into the pipe connection.

## ***For every application the adequate material***

Due to inferior quality, concrete in the manhole production was not able to exert its advantages enough in the past, which finally put the whole sector of manhole manufacturers on the spot. By fulfilling individual customer requirements in con-



The finished manhole base is dismantled. Jean-Claude Pitois: „With Perfect we operate in our familiar profession and support the acceptance of concrete.”



Production plants for pipes, manhole components and special parts

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nection with high-quality surfaces Matériaux Pitois finally succeeds in integrating manhole bases into the innovative product line of the concrete plant. Due to the exclusive use of self compacting concrete the added value remains in the own plant even though the exposure to self compacting concrete, which hadn't been used in this part of France so far, primarily led the company to a number of challenges. Beside the installation of the „Perfect“ manufacturing system also the mixer was adapted, a perfect composition for concrete was born and finally all processes were adapted to the use of sophisticated concrete quality.

Today in the non-automated production 2 of all in all 40 employees daily manufacture 20 to 25 manhole bases, which is compared to their former manual construction of the channels (in the plant or partially even on the building site) more than double the production capacity. The increase in productivity was primarily enabled by the continuous principle of the production system, which supports the employees from the receipt of the individual customer requirements to the production of the channel configuration and the casting of the manhole base.

## **Custom-made monolithic concrete manhole bases within less than 24 hours**

The product attributes of the manhole bases which are produced with the „Perfect“ manufacturing system lead as expected to unanimously positive reactions from customer side. Mr. Jean-Christophe Pitois, son of Jean-Claude Pitois and Sales Manager of the family business, confirms that each customer wants to take advantage of the custom-made monolithic components and improved quality. Especially the circumstance that standard manhole bases with a limited number of channel configurations often don't meet the customers requirements at the building site, makes the „Perfect“ manhole bases into products with a strategic meaning in the whole product range of Matériaux Pitois.

Hereby the rapid availability looms large: within 24 to maximum 48 hours after receipt of the order any custom-made manhole bases can be delivered to the building site – a service which cannot be provided with any other product so far.

## **Easier acquisition – higher customer satisfaction**

The inconsistent quality of the compressed concrete and manually formed channel was not the only handicap with the production of manhole bases. During the past decades also the lack of qualified manpower became a major disadvantage for the manufacturers. Matériaux Pitois was able to solve both problems by the use of the „Perfect“ production system. Now the work in the concrete plant is no more affected by uncomfortable work for hours or by the tedious access into the manhole bases. In fact the employees enjoy ergonomically designed workplaces ranging from the preparation of the channel configuration to the equipment or after treatment of the casting moulds. The new production system therefore also makes sure that new, attractive workplaces are created for which in a comparatively easy way enough employees can be attracted. The easement of work conditions is continued at the building site where the belatedly stonewalling of the channels can be left out. The parts are delivered with their custom-made channel at the required point of time and due to lifting anchors easily and securely installed.



*The multidimensional sawing technology is the core of the manufacturing system „Perfect“. Jean-Christophe Pitois: „Today primary customers become nearly automatically satisfied and recurrent customers due to Perfect.“*

### **Further information:**

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