

European Legislation in the UK - a threat or an opportunity?

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ABSTRACT

Within the United Kingdom, European Union (EU) legislation is having an increasing effect on the way of working within industry. Such legislation affects all aspects of life ranging from health and safety, dangerous substances, specification, production, emissions to the atmosphere, etc.

European harmonization of material standards has brought many advantages in simplifying and broadening the applications that can use fly ash. Work creating these standards has progressed producing documents that are acceptable throughout the EU. As a result, fly ash can now be used as an aggregate, as a cementitious material counting fully or partially towards the cement content in concrete, as a road construction material, as a fill material, etc. This has been advantageous to the ash industry. However, membership of the European Union (EU) has not all been beneficial.

Laws within the EU result from 'Directives' produced by the European Commission. Directives instruct the member countries the scope and basic requirements of National laws that should be adopted, that are subsequently refined by legal judgments from the European Court of Justice. The EU Waste Directive is one such document which has led to a considerable number of problems, especially within the UK. The wording of the Waste Directive has been interpreted differently within EU countries with the UK interpretation resulting in a particularly draconian regulatory system affecting many construction materials, including fly ash.

This paper will review both the beneficial and detrimental legislation being applied in UK and the future of ash as we see it.

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