

A civil engineer in the gravel plant

Medienmitteilung

- fanzun.swiss/a-civil-engineer-in-the-gravel-plant/

A few fine flakes fall quietly, and an icy wind blows. Even so, the construction site of the Oldis gravel plant in Haldenstein is buzzing with activity. Welding torches flicker, hammers pound, and above it all stands a crane whose job today is to set 12-metre-high wall formwork in place.

Matthias von Blumenthal, civil engineer at Fanzun AG, has now joined the workers. Before the heavy wall formwork swings across the site and the wall is closed in, he inspects the wall's reinforcement.

The aim of the Oldis gravel plant is to take in excavated material, process it and return it to the building materials cycle. In future, the plant will focus more on recycling and on producing recycled concrete, as primary material is finite. A new processing building is being built for this purpose. «My task as a civil engineer on this project covers the structural analysis of the building, the technical site supervision and the construction inspections,» says von Blumenthal. «At the moment, we are working on the formwork cycle with the large-panel formwork. The 12-metre-high walls are poured in one piece, first the cross walls, then the longitudinal walls. The beam walls are then hung in between,» he explains. He glances at his watch, because the schedule is tight. «That's why we are working even in these icy temperatures.»

Don't lose sight of anything

The civil engineer weaves through a forest of reinforcing bars sticking out of the ground and then steps onto the scaffolding that climbs up an already standing wall. He looks closely at certain spots, jots something down on his pad and moves on. «It's not a run-of-the-mill construction project. The structure is very large, and you have to take care not to lose the overview.» The processing building, the largest part of the project, is 80 metres long and 20 metres wide. Several ancillary structures are connected to it, such as a pre-crusher, a raw material feed and the conveyor belts. «Despite the large structure, you have to make sure you don't lose sight of the small ones,» says von Blumenthal.

«You shouldn't close yourself off to new technologies»

Back in the office, the civil engineer looks at his computer model again and enters his notes. Using structural analysis software, he checks the structural design of the processing building and its ancillary buildings. He seems satisfied with the result. «It's not the case that the civil engineer is just the quiet calculator in the background. The profession is much more varied. I notice this again and again on days like today, when I'm out on my inspection rounds and see a project take shape more and more. To some extent, you are also a problem solver, for example when you take part in meetings with the various parties and can contribute your view and comments as a civil engineer.»

Even so, Matthias von Blumenthal also sees a small drawback in the civil engineering profession. «Unfortunately, the civil engineering industry is sometimes a bit sluggish. It could be more open to innovation. Some working methods from the past could perhaps be done better today, or at least optimised. So you shouldn't close yourself off to new technologies, and you should be willing to try them out.»

A few hours later, the formwork elements swing across the construction site at the Oldis gravel plant. Everything goes smoothly. The fine snow flurry has since died down, and even the sun peeks out a little from behind its curtain of cloud. The fine snow fluff muffles almost every sound in the surroundings. Now and then, you can still hear a welding torch flicker.

À

Fanzun AG Architekten · Ingenieure · Berater
Ganzheitlich entwickeln, gestalten und realisieren.

Wir erwecken Ideen zum Leben.

Salvatorenstrasse 66
CH-7000 Chur

Birmensdorferstrasse 108
CH-8003 Zürich

Cho d'Punt 57
CH-7503 Samedan

Stradun 210
CH-7550 Scuol

+41 58 312 88 88
fanzun.swiss