

Business

No barriers as Cardox expansion is booming

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A COMPANY is harnessing the raw power of carbon dioxide to mine a rich seam.

Order books are bulging at Cardox International of Ashton Under Lyne, which makes and distributes a blockage elimination system.

Originally developed for the mining industry to break through coal and rock, the liquid-CO₂-driven system is now widely used in the cement industry and silo industries, such as food processing, oil, petrochemicals, sugar and salt.

It works by igniting a liquid-CO₂- filled alloy tube. The CO₂ expands instantaneously to 500 times its original volume.

It bursts out of the tube with a breaking pressure of 17.5 tons - enough to destroy any blockage in front of it in the process.

It is currently being used on Europe's largest civil engineering project, the Dublin Port tunnel, and managing director John Hodson says that is attracting growing interest from around the world.

He said: "Companies are more reluctant to use explosives.

"Our sales have doubled in the past two years to £800,000. We've just moved into new premises in Ashton to enable further expansion and we are looking at employing another five people over the next 18 months."

Cardox was established in 1987 after John led a management buy-out from American conglomerate the Marmon Group.

It employs eight people across two sites in Ashton and Kent.

With an international client list that includes every major global cement company, such as Lafarge, Holcim, Cemex and Heidelberg, John says that Cardox is recognised as the most effective blockage clearance system.

Around 85 per cent of current turnover comes from export sales, a figures that looks set to increase.

He said: "We are expanding rapidly in Australia and New Zealand. China, the world's second largest cement market, is beginning to open up. We've also just made our first sale in Argentina, had a £20,000 order from the Canary Islands only three days after signing up a distributor, and we are hoping to close a deal next month in Peru."

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