

BOLIDEN ADOPTS SURFCLEANER FOR SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT



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Fredrik Byberg
Property department planner, Aitik



Boliden Aitik - the largest open pit Coppermine in Sweden

Boliden is a high-tech metal company with its own mines and smelters, operating in Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Ireland. With a vision of being the most climate-friendly and respected metal supplier in the world, Boliden are constantly developing new methods for responsible production.

Boliden Aitik, located outside Gällivare in Lappland, is the largest open pit Coppermine in Sweden, and has been in operation since 1968. With 900 employees it is the largest private employer in the Gällivare Municipality. The ore is mined from chalcopyrite and contains copper, gold, and silver. Operations run 24/7 and the work is done by some of the largest equipment in the world, such as rock dumpers, weighing in at 570 tonnes when fully loaded and excavators capable to holding 45m³ of rock in their buckets.

Surfcleaner at Boliden Aitik

At Boliden, responsible, sustainable and efficient water management has both economic and environmental benefits and so this is a strategically important issue. As part of the continuous improvement of environmental performance, the Aitik mine invested in the Surfcleaner technology in 2023. “In our Truck service and maintenance workshop water is used to clean the equipment. Sometimes oil-spill accidents occur within the service area and, as we at Boliden have very high requirements to ensure contaminated process water does not leak outside our premises and downstream into the surrounding environment, we need to resolve these issues as efficiently and effectively as possible.” Explains Fredrik Byberg, planner in the property department within Aitik. He describes further the benefits of using the SCO 1000 as part of the water cleaning process; “We use the Surfcleaner in our flotation treatment plant. We can reduce the amount of chemicals needed in the plant which is of value not only from a cost perspective, but also a direct benefit to the environment.”

A flexible piece of equipment

Fredrik explains further that they also utilize the mobility of the unit “We sometimes get oil contaminated water stuck in the wells in our process-water sewer system. With the Surfcleaner technology, remedying this has drastically improved as we can use the highly mobile SCO 1000 to collect and separate the oil from the water where the problem occurs, in the well, instead of using a suction vehicle to drain it. The suction vehicle collects vast amounts of water together with the oil. Disposing of the contaminated water correctly generates high cost and burdens the environment further as it needs to be transported a great distance to be processed properly.”



Equipment: SCO 1000
Separation capacity: 1,000 l/h

Systems installed:
2023: 1 unit