

Another in the series of “What’s that and how does it work”



THE OPERATION OF THE BAGHOUSE IN THE BOILER HOUSE

The boilers used at the eastern end of the property use coal as the combustion fuel to generate heat which in turn converts water into steam for the paper making process. In keeping with our environmental and OHS responsibilities we have installed a baghouse for the purpose of ensuring particles of burnt coal do not escape to the atmosphere as a pollutant.

Before industry became educated on environmental matters, the smoke from coal fires would simply pass through a chimney which was high enough to allow its release above the heads of any people nearby. This is now an unacceptable practice and, in consequence, baghouses and other pollution control devices came into being.

Shoalhaven makes use of baghouse technology for our three boilers for the protection of our employees and the local community and to ensure compliance with air emission requirements of the Environmental Protection Authority.

Inside the baghouse there are multiple banks of bags within a housing through which the smokey emissions from the coal fire pass as a combustion gas containing particulate matter. The bags are constructed from a material that allows the gas to pass through, but not the finer particles. The particles become trapped within the bag while the cleaned gas passes up through the chimney to the atmosphere. The bags do a similar job to the bags in a vacuum cleaner. There is a monitoring device within the chimney that monitors and records the opacity or darkness of the gas we generate to ensure we are in compliance with our EPA licence.

The particles collected in the bags are carefully removed, via the dust handling system, to the ash bin and disposed of in an approved manner. Having control over air emissions on the site is a requirement of our EPA licence. The standard achieved by the baghouse exceeds our statutory requirements. Our accreditation under ISO 14001, an International Environmental Standard, has been proudly achieved through attention to continuous environmental improvement and considerable investment of many resources for many years.