

Wasa AG, 64293 Darmstadt, Germany

# KBH Baustoffwerke Gebhart & Söhne relies on the tried-and-tested

**KBH Baustoffwerke Gebhart & Söhne GmbH & Co. KG, based in the Allgäu, has for decades enjoyed an outstanding reputation as a manufacturer of high-quality concrete products. The company, which is managed today by Hans Gebhart, concentrates exclusively on high quality products - and products from KBH Baustoffwerke stand for innovation. The concept is working, as is proven by the continuously growing sales figures of the more than 400 sales outlets throughout Germany. KBH Baustoffwerke's extensive range of products includes paving stones, patio slabs, large slabs, block steps and green systems. These have been produced for more than 20 years on solid plastic boards from Wasa.**

One of the specialities of KBH Baustoffwerke is its direct link to machine manufacturing. Special machines for the finishing and processing of concrete pavers are manufactured under the name KBH Maschinenbau at the location in Lachen-Hetzlinshofen. The machines are planned, developed and distributed from Hetzlinshofen. KBH develops and designs the machines in close cooperation with the customer and adapts the concepts to the customer's individual needs and circumstances.

The combination of block producer and machine manufacturer is very unusual and probably an exception in the indus-

try in Europe. The degree of innovation of machine manufacturing is ultimately the solution to the problem in the concrete paving stone plant. At the same time the concrete paving stone plant is equipped relative to its size with finishing and special machines that make it possible in the first place to achieve market advances. Hence, both areas benefit from each other. For that reason, all the machines that KBH Maschinenbau sells are also in operation in its own plant. KBH Maschinenbau's slogan is thus "by practitioners for practitioners".

24 years ago Heinz Bechtold, founder of the present-day Wasa AG of Darmstadt, advertised a solid plastic production board made of recycling material with the name Wasa Uniplast. At that time such products were still unknown to concrete block manufacturers worldwide and parts of the market were still cautious. Not so KBH, because as a future-oriented company the thought of such a product aroused great interest and the decision was taken to make an investment for the Hetzlinshofen location. To the present day this decision has never been regretted and some of the production boards have already been in use for more than 20 years. KBH Bauwerkstoffe has maintained a very good partnership-like relationship with Wasa since 1995.



*KBH Artline-Green series - one of KBH Baustoffwerke's successful products ...*



*... the stationary aging machine type RA 1400*

**Reasons for purchasing the boards, their advantages and empirical values**

"It was difficult in the beginning because the dimensional accuracy of the extrusion process wasn't quite adequate. Unlike today, this problem could only be solved in those days through the calibration of the boards in a second process. Ultimately the Wasa Uniplast has played a considerable role in our growth over the years", explains Hans Gebhart. "At the very beginning we were sceptical, because a light concrete layer formed relatively quickly on the boards. However, this turned out to be not even slightly disadvantageous - in fact it appeared to assist the surface durability", he continues.



*An old Wasa Uniplast following the calibration process*

One of the first investments in the beginning was the procurement of the technical possibilities to wash the concrete products. The solid plastic boards allowed KBH to implement the plans without a problem - that wouldn't have been as easy with many other boards. "The board is insensitive to dirt, it's dense and in particular neutral. No wood dripping (with subsequent brown discolouration of the stones), no rusty water - the board always behaves in a neutral fashion", says Hans Gebhart, describing the advantages of the solid plastic boards from Wasa during washing.

The second important aspect was that single-shift operation became three-shift operation and the quantity of production boards was increased little by little. Until recently Wasa Uniplast production boards from at least four delivery generations were in circulation, without the company noticing any differences in the compaction of the stones. "The board is very dense and homogeneous, which means that the vibration is transmitted incredibly well into the mould. The Wasa Uniplast board is the most reliable production board for KBH", says Hans Gebhart.



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**Wasa Uniplast is followed by Wasa Uniplast Ultra**

When Steinfabrik Dormettingen GmbH was taken over in 2013, a positive side effect was that Wasa Uniplast production boards were also in use there. Although they were already 20 years old, they still had a sufficient residual lifetime so that an investment in new production boards wasn't immediately necessary.

The decision to finally replace all the old production boards was taken in 2017. Although high quality initially has its price, the decision was taken quite quickly and Wasa AG was commissioned to supply the new production boards to the plants in Dormettingen and Hetzlinshofen. Here, KBH showed itself once again to be future-oriented and invested in the highest-quality version and further development of the Wasa Uniplast - the Wasa Uniplast Ultra. Until 2007 Wasa supplied its solid plastic boards with profiles or also additional interior steel profiles for reinforcement. This step was only necessary until 2007, however, because from then on Wasa reinforced the boards with microfibres.

Hans Gebhart liked the idea of a universally homogenous production board that would in principle allow virtually unlimited regrinding with constant good vibration transmission. A buyer was also quickly found for the old production boards. Hence, concrete products are still being manufactured today on Wasa Uniplast production boards from 1995.

The new generation of the Wasa solid plastic board, the Uniplast Ultra, is particularly interesting for KBH Baustoffwerke because it is possible to define the deflection very precisely in relation to the board thickness through a specifically adjustable quantity of fibres to be mixed in. "We opted for a board with a rather high fibre content and a board thickness that will allow us to grind the boards after 10 years and then use them for a further 10 years - still without exceeding the desired maximum deflection", says Hans Gebhart, outlining his expectations for the new product. "We calculate a service life of 20 years for the boards. That includes corresponding care with repair of the surfaces if damage should occur at

some time. On account of our many years of experience with the boards we know that it works well. The washing of concrete products no longer plays a big part at the moment, but the wet side coating does. The plastic board shows its strengths here too", he continues. ■

**FURTHER INFORMATION**



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*Wasa Uniplast Ultra, Wasa's premium product since 2007*