

► POWER SYSTEMS

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Sustainable changes at Rheinmetall's St. Leon-Rot site: district heating system saves up to 800 tonnes of CO₂ annually

KS Gleitlager GmbH has officially inaugurated a district heating and local heating system at its site in St. Leon-Rot (Rhein-Neckar district) on 28 November 2024, with representatives from politics, administration, and regional business. By installing the system, the company will reduce its CO₂ emissions by up to 800 tons per year in the future – a valuable contribution to achieving the group's sustainability goal of becoming CO₂-neutral by 2035.

This is made possible by the cooperation with the neighbouring SLR Giesserei (foundry), which was signed at the beginning of 2024. Between the foundry, which can only partially utilise the waste heat generated by the process itself, and KS Gleitlager a closed, underground circulation system with two water pipes is being created. In one pipe, water at a temperature of around 80 degrees flows from the foundry to the KS Gleitlager technical centre. There, the water releases the heat again - as energy for various production processes and, in future, also for heating. The now cooled water returns to the foundry through the second pipe, where it is reheated in the production process. The project was realized under the direction of CEIH GmbH.



This is a win-win-win project: firstly, the neighboring foundry previously had to cool down its excess waste heat at great expense and release it into the environment. Secondly, KS Gleitlager GmbH will be able to significantly reduce its natural gas consumption for generating process and heating energy in the future. And thirdly, the environment will benefit from this newly created cycle system between the two companies – through less waste heat and reduced CO₂ emissions.

“With our plain bearing solutions, we support our customers every day in reducing friction losses and increasing the efficiency and service life of their products. In this respect, the idea of sustainability is an integral part of our company,” says Dr. Klaus Pucher, CEO of KS Gleitlager GmbH. “I am all the more pleased that we have been able to successfully implement this lighthouse project together with SLR and CEIH.”

“Planning and implementing the technology was not always easy, but in the end we were able to optimize the system for providing heat and to maximize the temperature level,” confirms Alexander Czuberny, Technical Director at SLR Giesserei St. Leon-Rot GmbH.

► Key facts

- Rheinmetall celebrates the inauguration of a local heating and district heating system at the KS Gleitlager site in St. Leon-Rot
- District heating system will save 800 tonnes of CO₂ per year in future
- Cooperation with neighbouring foundry to use process-related waste heat via underground circulation system

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“We have put a lot of heart and soul into this project,” explains Ralf Hauswirth, managing director of CEIH GmbH. “Among other things, we took care of the funding, tax and legal guidelines and revised the route planning several times. In the end, the effort paid off and we are very proud to have mastered all the challenges well.”

KS Gleitlager GmbH is a subsidiary of the Düsseldorf-based technology group Rheinmetall. Its high-quality products are sold through a global distribution network that extends far beyond the automotive industry.

The Rheinmetall subsidiary KS Gleitlager is known for its high-precision plain bearings, which are supplied worldwide from St. Leon-Rot. In addition to primary material production with its own aluminium foundry and sintering facilities, production also includes highly complex forming processes through to fully automated testing facilities for the final quality inspection. The batch sizes that can be produced economically range from 1 to millions. Around 560 people are employed at the St. Leon-Rot site.

The SLR Group produces over 130,000 tonnes of machine parts in high-quality nodular cast iron every year. The German foundry St. Leon-Rot GmbH, the main plant and headquarters of the SLR Group, was founded in 1981.

CEIH GmbH is a comprehensive service provider for climate-friendly energy supply. The company develops, plans and implements customized, comprehensive energy concepts.