

# Pilmico uses waste ash for construction

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Pilmico Foods Corp.

The use of the by-products of rice husks as an alternative to bunker fuel has been again proven sustainable in a feeds manufacturing facility.

Pilmico Foods Corp., the integrated agribusiness and food unit of the Aboitiz Group, began using a boiler powered by the biomass in 2018. Sourced from partner rice mills, the burning husks generate steam in the boiler to cook and sanitize the feeds, an Aboitiz news release said.

This initiative has helped Pilmico to cut more than 60 percent of its bunker fuel consumption. Not only it has reduced the company's overall production costs, it also lessened its carbon emissions.

In its constant search for sustainable alternatives, civil engineers of the Pilmico Animal Nutrition Corp. (PANC) discovered other potential applications for the burned rice husks' ash: as mix for cement for the plants' construction needs, the news release added.

“When we started using the biomass boiler almost two years ago, we saw process improvement and reduced costs. But in Pilmico, we know that the challenge does not stop there. If you find a solution for something, you continue to improve that to ensure, that it stays relevant,” said Engr. Michael D. Cayabyab, maintenance mechanical supervisor at Central Maintenance Department (CMD) of PANC.

To minimize costs and further lower waste from Pilmico’s Tarlac feeds and farms facility, PANC’s engineers conducted a research to find other supplemental uses of waste ash from the biomass boiler.

After some experiments, they were able to establish a concrete mix from waste ash which decreased the actual cement usage by 20 percent, Aboitiz said.

The waste ash mixture that is used in Pilmico’s Slaughterhouse and Meat Cutting facility in Tarlac supplemented the concrete mix for road perimeters, curb and gutter that controls water flow by coursing it to specific drainages that helps prevent flooding in the facility. The same materials are also used in the perimeter fence of the facility.

The waste ash and cement mixture is, likewise, used in the facility’s swine farm concrete slats that are used for the elevated flooring of the swine pens that have a flushing system underneath for easier cleaning and maintenance.

PANC’s Central Maintenance Department said the precast concrete slabs used for the road perimeters are highly efficient and advantageous, the news release said.

It said the construction team was able to produce their preferred specifications, allowing them to build with better quality and efficiently produced materials.

“Guided by Pilmico’s core value of innovation, we improved the original initiative of using rice husks for our feeds production process. With that, we are able to create more uses from the by-products of the by-products [rice husks] we are using,” Cayabyab said.

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