

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TOLEDO, O., Oct. 20. . . Glass melting furnace operations at Owens-Corning Fiberglass Corporation are being converted to a computer control system that the company developed to produce a more uniform product in greater quantities.

The system is the first of its kind in the United States.

Owens-Corning, world's leading glass fiber manufacturer, will use several IBM 1800 data acquisition and control systems in making the conversion. They are already in use to control furnaces at three U.S. plants and one overseas. Furnaces at several other Owens-Corning Fiberglas plants will be under computer control by the end of 1968.

Benjamin E. Boyd, vice president-manufacturing, said Owens-Corning proved the value of direct digital control computers in glass fiber production in a pilot study it conducted several years ago.

"Use of direct digital control computers has improved the stability of temperatures in our glass furnaces by as much as 60 per cent, giving us better quality at a higher output rate," Mr. Boyd said.

"Compared to our previous analog control system, the digital system resulted in a 50 per cent reduction in the cost of controls. We expect similar efficiencies with our other furnaces."

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Explaining the direct digital computer control of a glass furnace, Mr. Boyd said, "Sensing devices are placed in and around the furnace to measure such things as temperature and pressure."

The computer scans these devices from ten times a second to once every 1-1/2 minutes. The scanning frequency and sequences are controlled by the computer program. The readings are analyzed by the computer for deviations from established targets. The computer program then determines what changes must be made in the process and provides output signals to bring about the correction.

Mr. Boyd noted that part of the cost savings result from the 1800s' ability to control up to five times as many "loops" as previously installed equipment. In this case, a loop is comprised of a temperature sensor, the computer and a control valve.

At Owens-Corning's Newark, Ohio plant, a recently installed IBM 1800 is controlling three times as many loops as the computer it replaced. A second 1800 at Newark is used to develop new control techniques.

Other Owens-Corning plants using 1800s are located in Aiken and Anderson, S.C. and Battice, Belgium.

1800 control systems will also be installed at Owens-Corning plants in Santa Clara, Calif., Kansas City, Mo., Barrington, N.J. and Waxahachie, Texas.

New plants planned in Fairburn, Ga., and Jackson, Tenn., will also be equipped with IBM 1800s.

The Fiberglas materials made by Owens-Corning are used in some 33,000 end products. These range from thermal and acoustical insulation to fire-safe fabrics; from non-corrosive tanks, giant boat hulls and unitized bathrooms, to automotive tires and other reinforced rubber, plastic and paper products.

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