



Swedish cleantech group Vilokan expands its wastewater treatment service for airports – secures glycol recycling contract with all Swedavia's Swedish airports.

Headquartered a handful of miles from the Norwegian border, Vilokan has been in the business of treating and recycling water and solvents for more than 25 years. As airport operators face a mounting pressure to handle their wastewater, the company's experience and technology spells opportunity: Still only a fraction of the world's operators have an efficient and environmentally sustainable method for recovering and handling water. Spent deicing fluids is one part of the problem as the single most important ingredient – ethylene or propylene glycol – has been shown to pose a risk for the environment.

-Propylene glycol consumes a lot of oxygen when degenerating, which makes it an environmental problem. There is also cadmium and other heavy metals in the wastewater, and it is just a matter of time before the airports will have to address these problems at a large scale, says Lars Rosell, CEO of Vilokan Group.

Spent deicing fluids – if collected at all – have traditionally been transported in tank trucks to water treatment plants. As a contrast, the Vilokan group has developed a range of solutions whereby deicing fluids and other wastewater streams can be treated and recycled locally. Sold to the airport as a service, the solution minimizes the need for heavy water transports, and enables the operator to handle wastewater without tying up capital in expensive equipment. In the case of deicing fluids, the value of the glycol itself becomes an ingenious part of the service delivery.

-For us this means we can set up a plant, treat the wastewater and create, in essence, a local circular economy, wholly or at least partially paid for by the inherent value of the glycol, says Lars Rosell.

The contract with Swedavia, an entity owned by the Swedish government, is Vilokan's second major airport deal. The first was struck with the airport of Montreal in 2014.

Contact information
Lars Rosell
+46 (0)70 514 42 44



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