

# Productivity is all about working smarter, not harder

**PRODUCTIVITY** improvement does not have to be about working harder or longer hours—just smarter—as a recent innovation in Forest Resources work has shown.

Whenever a new road is built and pipes laid to control the flow of water on them, the ends of the pipes need to be protected so that they don't become washed out. (See diagram.)

Until recently in Manjimup, this has meant surrounding the pipe ends with rocks or sandbagging them, which involves a lot of heavy lifting and double handling.

With a little innovation this task has been made much easier and as a result a lot more can be done in a day.

Instead of using a standard cement mixer to mix the sand and cement for the sandbags, this is now done at the local cement works. This combined sand and cement is loaded straight

by Deirdre Maher

into the back of a tip truck, and is ready to go out to work by 7.30 am.

Mixing up a load of sandbags once took up to four hours a day, which meant that staff weren't out of the gate until 10.00 am.

The sand and cement is bagged in the field, and instead of hard work at one end of a shovel a 'gravity fill' mechanism on the back of the truck is used.

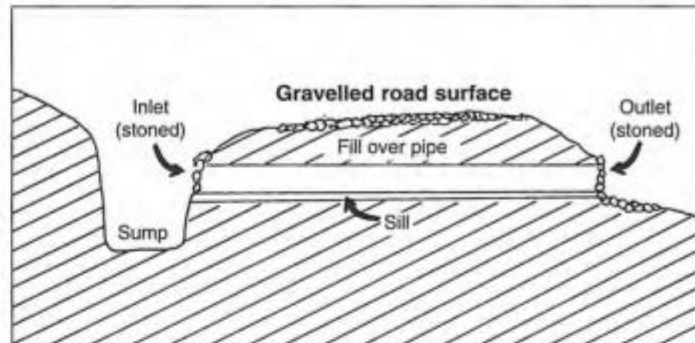
After discussing the design with forest resources roading officer Gary Stanger and senior operations officer Brian Moss, the mechanism was designed and built by Manjimup District forest worker and welder Steven Radomiljac.

The production rate using a cement mixer averaged 275 bags a day. With

the bags weighing about 35 kg each, this meant that the five people needed to do the job were, collectively, shovelling and lifting 9.6 tonnes a day. Not surprisingly, there were a few casualties with this method, usually in the form of back strains.

With the new method of using pre-mixed sand and cement, four people are able to put out 315 bags a day. This means that they have effectively increased the productivity from 55 bags to 78 bags per person, per day. That is a huge 42 per cent increase in productivity.

At the end of the day everyone is happier. Using gravity to their advantage, they haven't had to work as hard as they formerly did, and they know they have been more productive and, therefore, competitive enough to secure the work as an ongoing part of Manjimup District's works program.



Forest workers Steven Radomiljac (left) and Mark Radomiljac with adapted gravity-feed mechanism. Photo by Graham Norrish

## How's your health?

A **HEALTHY** lifestyle involves the balancing of a number of factors. These include our exercise and recreation habits, our ability to manage the competing of work, family, and social demands as well as the things we put into our body. Using the following checklist, see how your nutritional intake adds up to provide a healthy balance.

**Nutrition check list:** Forget what you have heard about good and bad foods. Balanced eating means that you can eat all foods—it's just that it's best if you eat more of some than others. Is your diet well balanced? Do this quiz and find out how well you score. Tick the box if you answer yes.

- I eat at least 3-4 slices of bread a day (1 roll = 2 slices of bread) ...
- I eat 1 serve of breakfast cereal each day—or an extra slice of bread ...
- I eat at least 1 piece of fruit each day ...
- I eat mostly whole grain breads and cereals ...
- I eat at least 3 vegetables or have a salad most days ...
- I eat at least 1 and usually 2 serves

- of meat or meat alternatives each day (poultry, seafood, eggs, dried beans or nuts) ...
- I spread butter or margarine thinly on bread or use none at all ...
- I fry no more than once a week
- I use only poly- or mono-unsaturated oil for cooking (tick yes if don't use fat in cooking) ...
- I avoid using oil-based dressings on salads ...
- I use reduced-fat dairy products
- I cut the fat off meat and take the skin off chicken ...
- I drink no more than 4 cups of tea, coffee, hot chocolate, coke or caffeine-containing drinks a day ...
- I avoid adding salt to my food or cooking ...
- I eat fatty snacks such as chocolate, chips etc., no more than once a week ...
- I eat 3 serves of dairy food or a soy milk alternative each day (1 serve = 200 ml milk, 1 slice (30 g) hard cheese, 200 g yogurt or 200 ml fortified soy milk) ...
- I would skip breakfast, lunch or dinner no more than once a week ...

- I am aware of the best sources of iron and try to include an iron-rich food in my diet each day ...
- When I drink alcohol, I mostly drink no more than 2 standard drinks on any day and would rarely drink alcohol more than is recommended as the safe drink-driving limit (tick yes if you don't drink) ...
- I eat fast/takeaway food no more than once a week ...

**Scoring: for each 'yes' answer, score 1 point:**

- 18 or more . . . Excellent
- 15-17 . . . Room for improvement
- 12-14 . . . Just made it
- Less than 12 . . . Poor

Very active people will need to eat more breads, cereals and fruit than indicated in this quiz, but to stay healthy no one should be eating less. Use this quiz as a personal nutrition check list or to rate a diet you may read in a book or magazine. It will help you to sort out the good diets from the fad diets.

Source: *The Taste of Fitness*, Hay and O'Connor.



Left: Stephen Radomiljac  
Right: mark Radomiljac.  
with adapted 'gravity  
feed' mechanism.

PROD MESA.DOC















