

Citizens' Association "Save the Beocin" addressed the newsroom asking them to inform the public about what they claimed was an environmental catastrophe in the municipality. The "Lafarge" cement plant, which they described as the causative agent of this condition, denies these allegations.

According to "Save the Beocin" cause of the environmental disaster is Lafarge Holcim, company that came to Beocin after the privatization of the "Beocin Cement Plant", and which replaced natural gas with petroleum coke.

The association said in a statement that the company started using waste tires, communal waste, and from last year, hazardous waste for incineration.

"Lafarge Holcim" cement plant Beocin is a plant that is designed for the production of cement, not incineration, for these purposes there are special plants such as waste incinerators, and company as such does not have the filters required for the activity of incineration", according to "Save Beocin".

According to them, the most dangerous of the many carcinogenic compounds emitted during the use of alternative fuels, which the existing filters intended for cement production cannot remove, are dioxins and furans.

"Their carcinogenicity is confirmed at the level of several micrograms, and they enter the food chain and precipitate in all living beings", emphasizes this association of citizens, noting that they were used in the Vietnam War as poisonous toxins.

"Save the Beocin" warns that the emission of these gases at "Lafarge Holcim" cement plant is measured only once a year, claiming that the cement plant produces cement using alternative fuels for 330 days or 7,920 hours per year.

The statement also states the exact figures, which they say are cement plant's, and related to the waste burning last year. So "Save the Beocin" writes that 50,867 tons of petrol coke was burned, waste tires 10,974 tons, waste oil 5,131 and communal industrial waste 24,912 tons.

There is a justifiable fear that Beocin will become a "Sacrificial Zone" due to dioxin contamination, a name for the dioxin-contaminated area that banned the use of plant and animal foods for human and animal consumption, which would result in the collapse of the municipality, specify citizens gathered around "Save Beocin" .

As for the measuring stations, the association states that of the existing two, one in the circle of the water factory has not worked for years, and the other, which was in the center

of Beocin, was moved to the primary school yard where it is surrounded by a tree canopy. The statement reminded that countries in the region, such as Slovenia and Croatia, but also some of our municipalities - "Kosjeric TITAN" cement plant, have banned the use of alternative fuels in cement production due to the high environmental risk.

"Otherwise, "Lafarge" and "Holcim" corporations are known for environmental incidents, the most famous being the one in Mexico that caused the death of 11 villagers near Holcim's "APASCO" cement plant," Save the Beocin warned.

"Lafarge Holcim" told Danas.rs that the association's allegations were "pretentious wording that is incorrect".

The communications manager of that company, Snezana Petrovic, pointed out that "Lafarge" is in compliance with all the legal provisions governing the environment.

"Since the arrival in Serbia in 2002, "Lafarge" has implemented a large investment program worth 150 million euros, with the focus on installing modern filters and improving the environment," Petrovic said.

She also claims that the purchase and use of modern equipment have helped reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 25 percent. "The investment worth EUR 7.2 million, realized this year, will allow further reduction of carbon dioxide emissions."

"The cement industry cannot be compared to incinerators because it is a completely different type of process. Among other things, combustion takes place at far lower temperatures (800 °C), a much shorter retention time, and energy is not fully used," they responded to the claims of the association "Save the Beocin".

They also state that modern technology used at "Lafarge", rotary kilns with preheaters and calciners, have low pollutant emissions, much lower than the prescribed limit values.

When it comes to dioxins and furans, they add from the cement plant, they are formed in the combustion process in the temperature range of 200-400 °C and are not characteristic of the technological process of cement production.

"The results of measurements in a Lafarge cement plant performed by an external accredited company are well below the prescribed limit values," they point out.

According to them, the company is obliged to measure gas emissions twice a year. They are responding to the accusations of the "Save the Beocin" association by saying that they have set up continuous monitoring of dust, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, total organic carbon, ammonia, hydrogen chloride, hydrogen fluoride and oxygen.

According to "Lafarge Holcim", measuring stations that test the air quality claim that their work is the responsibility of state institutions, ie the "Environmental Protection Agency", and the data are available on the Agency's web site daily.



Serbia: The citizens of Beocin warn of the harmfulness of the cement plant, Lafarge denies it

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