

PERMIAN PRODUCTIVITY

BY TOM KUENNEN

“Oil patch” construction and the infrastructure required to support crude oil extraction – along with the personnel and families involved – has driven business activity in the Midland-Odessa region to new heights. And while the lower price of oil recently has cooled the local economy somewhat, the demand for stone continues and it’s been a boon to West Texas road contractor Jones Bros. Twin impact crushers from Kleemann are keeping Jones Bros. supplied with all the stone it needs to serve customers in the economically active Permian Basin.

Jones Bros. Dirt & Paving Contractors, Inc., Odessa, Texas, is a road contractor which undertakes projects from major highways to subdivision streets to parking lots, and everything in-between in the West Texas region. The firm also provides pavement preservation services such as seal coats (chip seals).

At Cooper Pit, one of Jones Bros. MR 110 ZS
EVO crushers processes caliche



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In Church Pit, second of two MR 110 ZS EVO crushers from Kleemann works deposit of caliche for state and local roadbuilding

“Jones Bros. began in 1952 doing parking lots in Odessa,” Danny Wallace, crusher superintendent for Jones Bros. said. “Now we’ve got over 200 employees and cover most of west Texas, north to Lubbock and south to Big Bend National Park. We work on state projects, but with the oil boom, our real estate development and commercial work in the area has really grown in the last two to three years.”

While Jones Bros. does not build oil field road and drill pads, much of the stone it produces winds up as base material in the oil patch roadways and pads. “Concrete rock, typically minus 1 in. size, is another big seller around here, for all the concrete work in the oil fields,” Wallace said.

He’s noticed a growing need for crushed aggregate for oil patch roads and pads, versus the pit run material used conventionally. These usually unpaved roads typically have been built with 8 to 10 inches of pit run placed on a bladed right-of-way, but now oil companies have found use of crushed, screened aggregates instead of pit run results in a longer-lasting road. “Some of the oil firms are requiring crushed material now, because it lasts a whole lot longer than the pit run,” Wallace said.

Typically Jones Bros. extracts caliche, a layer of immature limestone which rests beneath a thin veneer of soil. The friable caliche layer ranges from 3 to 6 feet deep, to as much as 40 feet deep of good, strong material. The caliche is drilled and shot prior to crushing.

To this end, Jones Bros. began using two Kleemann MR 110 ZS EVO crushers in June 2014. “We had so many jobs that our existing equipment wasn’t going to be able to get everything done,” Wallace said. “Knowing Kevin Taylor, our Kirby-Smith Machinery, Inc. territory manager, he came up with a good plan and we got what we needed.”

Mobile crushers can be complex pieces of equipment, and the service provided by Kirby-Smith was a major reason Jones Bros. went with the Kleemanns.

“Service was important because we are far removed from larger population centers,” Wallace said. “The other distributors weren’t able to do what they said they were going to do.”

Electric vs Hydraulic Drives

Kleemann’s electric-driven platform – as opposed to hydraulic drives – was another plus for Jones Bros. “We were having a bunch of trouble with the hydraulic sides of the other machines,” Danny Vasquez, crusher superintendent said. “Hoses were busting all the time, with leaks everywhere. Because the hoses were metric design, the hydraulic shops here in town did not have the fittings. We struggled to get parts, and wanted to go with electric-driven machines.”

Electric-driven crushers got the job done, Vasquez found. “Overall, electric [has] less leaks and fewer hoses to deal with. The system runs more efficiently.”

“We’re using an average of 50 to 60 gallons of fuel less per day than we’d use with the hydraulic machines, about \$200 a day per machine,” Chris Cisneros, crusher foreman for Jones Bros. said. “When you add that up over an eight- to 10-day run, it’s quite a bit.”

“The economy of less fuel consumption improves our bottom line substantially, especially over a year’s time,” Wallace added.

When visited, the twin Kleemanns were operating at Jones Bros.’ Cooper and Church pits. Both machines were producing from 250 to 280 TPH, producing all minus 1-inch aggregate.

In both pits, Jones Bros. feeds the plants once a minute using a 42-inch bucket on a Komatsu PC 360LP-10 excavator. Chunks as large as 40 inches are fed to the crushers. A vibrating prescreen keeps the abundant fines out of the impact crusher itself and combines them into the main feed. “It keeps the units from excessive wear, and saves fuel as well,” Wallace said.

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At Church Pit, are Jones Bros.' crusher foreman Chris Cisneros and plant operator Gerardo Coronado



Oil extraction and well service industry drives much of demand for crushed aggregate; at Cooper Pit, Jones Bros.' MR 110 ZS EVO operates in shadow of oil rig

Built-In Secondary Screen

The "S" in the nomenclature MR 110 ZS EVO indicates a full-function secondary screen that's installed on the Kleemann's load-out conveyor. "It's great for us because it keeps us from having to get another secondary screen," Vasquez said. "We have everything in one package, and that's a plus. This is the first time we've had this feature."

When relocation of the crusher within a quarry is required – for example, opening of a newly blasted shelf – Jones Bros. staff moves it using the crusher's remote control. "It's very simple and is one of the advantages of these portable crushers," Vasquez said. "Once we're done in one location we can pick up in another and begin crushing. With a stationary crusher you were stuck where you were."

The mobile, tracked crushers pose a work environment benefit as well. "Back in the day, we ran a lot of stationary crushers," Vasquez said. "When the wind kicked in, we had to be sent home. It could get so bad that the loader operator could not see the crusher. With the tracked crusher, you can reposition it so the wind blows away from the operation, and we can keep things running and there is no downtime."

"The crusher's mobility is a real convenience," Wallace said "We can move them on a moment's notice. The way the business is out here now, sometimes we have to relocate quicker than a woman changes her mind in a shoe store." 